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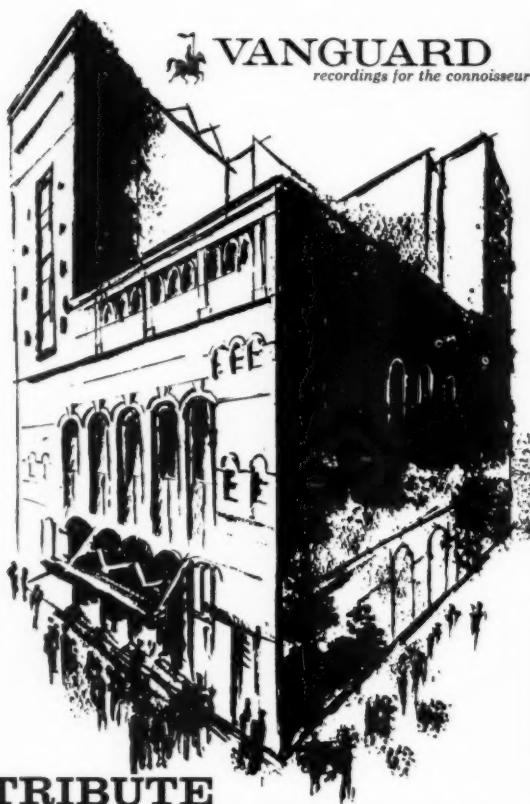
The American

RECORD GUIDE



JANUARY 1960



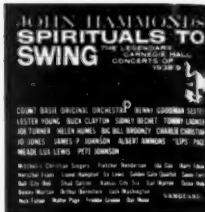


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The American Record Guide

incorporating  THE AMERICAN TAPE GUIDE

for JANUARY, 1960

Volume 26, Number 5

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ON THE COVER: The enormously gifted pianist Jacob Lateiner, whose Westminster recording of the Brahms Handel and Paganini Variations is reviewed by The Editor on page 352.

Will it be possible to standardize stereo recording techniques?

By FRITZ A. KUTTNER

This is a slightly modified version of a paper delivered before the Audio Engineering Society in late 1959. Dr. Kuttner recently contributed another controversial piece, "Musical Art vs. Technology". It was published in these pages last October.

THE QUESTION raised in the title of this paper is fraught with implications, hidden criticism, and doubts about the future development and possibilities of the stereo medium. Such doubts and question marks are also prompted by the fact that audio engineering research and experimentation sometimes do not aim for the best technological solutions but in the direction of the least sales resistance. Moreover, it is not unusual that convincing or promising research results are turned down by the marketing specialists and sales departments if they consider such new findings or solutions to be commercially not feasible, no matter whether their judgment is reliable or not. Stereo reproduction would be a better medium today if the engineer had more freedom in shaping the performance and characteristics of new audio products; by such freedom I do not mean independence from sound commercial considerations, but independence from the dictatorial rulings of the sales department.

Now, the standardization of audio processes, methods and equipment is a terrifying undertaking, burdened with difficulties and resistances from which the engineer shrinks with the same fears and idiosyncrasies that are felt by the administrative and production specialists. Just remember the fights and meager compromises until the speed question of 33 versus 45 r.p.m. reached some sort of compromise, or until the RIAA equalization curve was accepted by the American recording industry. In fact, I wish I could get a penny for each disc cut and pressed with considerable deviations from the RIAA standard.

The attempt to impose new and uniform rules on stereo recording procedures might develop all aspects of an industrial war, in addition to accusations of crimes that aim for un-American suppression of individual liberties and creative freedoms in the recording arts. Yet, I do not see how we can make any significant progress in stereo reproduction unless a serious attempt towards standardization is made, and unless a moderate success materializes from such efforts. This statement is made in the face of the most

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The further we advance on the road of stereophony, the more vague do the claims and professed objectives become. . . I have never heard so much evasive and embarrassed doubletalk from engineers and sound specialists. . . They talk now just as we musicologists are accused of talking: esthetic balderdash, evading responsibility and clarity of meaning . . .

tremendous difficulties one may anticipate for any standardization project of this kind. I am also aware that I am not proposing anything new or particularly interesting. All I am trying to do is to apply some common sense, to plead for something that has become an obvious necessity; my address is not a learned paper, but rather a desperate manifesto.

To make myself understood, let me quote a quip by G. B. Shaw on the subject of specialization; his remark is as witty as it is cruel, and it applies to any profession, including engineers and musicologists. "A specialist", said G.B.S., "is a person who knows more and more about less and less, and he winds up by knowing everything about nothing." The most pernicious consequence of specialization in any field is, of course, the growing and finally total isolation of the individual and his expert knowledge, and there is only one remedy against this curse of twentieth-century science: co-operation of specialists, exchange of knowledge, and joint effort to solve the problems which defy highly specialized approaches. Almost all significant progress in science and engineering, in the last 20 or 30 years, was the result of such co-operation and teamwork, and most of us are already aware of recent trends of a *rapprochement* between the sciences and humanities—a proposition that would have sounded preposterous to most engineers as little as 15 years ago.

We also know that stereophonic sound reproduction, apart from the many engineering problems still waiting for improved solutions, has neither solved nor

really investigated even the most fundamental questions of psycho-acoustics and sound physiology. These problems demand close co-operation between engineers, musicians, musicologists, psychologists, and physiologists. Hence my manifesto, for the situation is utterly confused or, to spoof certain war reports from the front line: "The situation is desperate but not serious."

What actually is the objective of stereophony? Hardly any two experts are agreed on this. At first, product and sales engineering talk used to stress the feature of directional perception, and methods all hinged upon certain sacred and mystical distances: 7 inches for ear lobes and microphones, 8 feet for playback speakers. When this was found to be nonsense and non-essential at the same time, distances became a free-for-all, and attention turned to depth perception and spatial separation of individual or partial sound sources. It soon turned out that depth perception in stereo playback was a doubtful illusion that worked quite unreliably and was also non-essential; furthermore, the musicians began to object to spatial separation and depth discrimination on the grounds that most compositions call for blending of sound sources rather than for separation, and that in many instances the carefully engineered effects were unmusical.

Next came the proposition of greater clarity and transparency of composite sound phenomena, and finally the illusion of spaciousness suggesting the reverberation and time-delay or precedence phenomena characteristic of large concert

halls. The further we advance on the road of stereophony, the more vague do the claims and professed objectives become, and I am delighted to state that I have never heard so much evasive and embarrassed doubletalk from engineers and sound specialists as we hear now from them on the topic of the objectives of stereo reproduction. They talk now just as we musicologists are always accused of talking: esthetic balderdash evading responsibility and clarity of meaning. Our two professions have found their first common denominator for future co-operation. When I listen to the latest statements by engineers on the objectives of stereo sound, I get the impression that we are now witnessing a revolutionary achievement of realistic reproduction processes: the recent invention of true monophonic high fidelity which can also be had by using two channels.

My conclusion is that we don't quite know what stereo actually is for, and we had better find out and agree on it before it is too late. That will take an enormous amount of psycho-acoustic and physiological investigation, and if that is successfully completed, we may know better

what we are dealing with and what we actually want. A further step would then be to develop technological methods for achieving what we want to achieve.

Next let us look at loudspeaker setups for stereo playback as they are found at present in the homes. The sacred 8-foot distance has been discarded and is now mainly of archeological or historical interest. Instead, we find any distance from 6 inches (in portable stereo miracles for \$39.95) to 35-foot speaker fronts lining whole walls in the mansions of well-heeled stereo maniacs. Frequently two systems are set up to face each other at distances varying from 5 feet up to 30 feet, and the listeners may sit between them, next to them outside the line of direct radiation, or at some distance from the speakers which radiate at each other rather than at the listener. In countless packaged systems, including expensive deluxe models, the speakers are mounted on the outer sides of the console, facing two opposite walls and radiating away from each other, and there is hardly any fantastic or nonsensical setup variety that has not been tried as yet. I have seen photographs of an installation featur-

THE AUTHOR of the accompanying article will offer a series of nine free lectures on Helmut Walcha's recorded performances of J. S. Bach's organ works, with the aim of making music lovers better acquainted with the unique achievements of the great blind organist and with Bach's organ compositions. The talks will be given at the Kuttner home on Manhattan's upper west side. Admission is free, but owing to space limitations (30 persons maximum per evening) guests will be admitted on individual invitation only.

The lectures begin at 8:30 p.m. and end around 11 p.m.; during the intermissions tea will be served. On each occasion a selection of Bach's music will be discussed, with attention to characteristics of form and style, and then heard on records. Walcha's performances will be evaluated, partly in comparison with other organists. The structure and sound aspects of the three baroque organs used in the Walcha recordings will be treated, along with the disposition of these instruments and Walcha's registration technique. The commentaries are planned on a non-professional, non-specialist level.

In order to accommodate persons regularly engaged on certain weekdays, the nine evenings will alternate as follows:

Tuesdays	Jan. 19	Feb. 9	March 1
Wednesdays	Jan. 27	Feb. 17	March 9
Thursdays	Feb. 4	Feb. 25	March 17

If the number of applications should be large, it may not be possible to extend invitations for the complete series to more than a few guests. Those who wish to attend should write to Dr. Kuttner in care of *The American Record Guide*, giving their full names and addresses plus the dates for which an invitation is desired. Please be sure to include a stamped, self-addressed return envelope.

ing one system on the ceiling radiating downward, and a second system built into the floor and radiating, through an iron grille, upwards to the ceiling. Most of this is, of course, absurd because it has no relation to recording techniques as they are applied at present in the majority of studios; and the only thing I am still waiting for is a stereo speaker system under the bed radiating upward through the mattress. The woofer for this possibility is already in existence—in the shape of a square 2 x 2 metal box flat enough to fit under any bed or couch.

This is a very confused and confusing situation, and the two industries are to blame for it. As long as there is no agreement even on the fundamental objectives of stereo effects and methods, everyone is entitled to play around with setups to the heart's desire: if the once sacred placement does not produce convincing results, a preposterous one might.

The same is true of recording setups and microphone experimentation. All we are agreed upon is that two microphones are minimum requirement, or else the thing may sound like too darned good mono recording. But there is no reason why we should not use three, four, five, or up to 20 mikes. And as far as distances are concerned, anything from the 7-inch ear lobe archeology to 120 feet will go—unto tape, discs, ceiling transducers, and mattress radiators. The art of deflecting stereo sound has become a very sophisticated pastime, and the keen pleasure its practitioners derive from it is getting close to being sinful. The most important innovation, on the other hand, is the smallest setup distance, and we are duly impressed by Dr. Neumann's stereo creation—he housed two microphones, side by side, in one small shell at one-inch distance. His last triumph, in admirable consistency, is the housing of two microphones in the same shell at $\frac{1}{2}$ inch vertical distance, and zero distance laterally. Let us be patient—give Dr. Neumann another year and he will have succeeded in creating the ultimate: two microphones at *no* distance. Then we shall be back where we came from: beautiful monophonic sound, which is the great thing of the future to look

forward to!

I do not mean to be funny—I am just trying to evaluate the present stereo situation soberly and to drive home some very unpleasant truths. It is next to impossible to find two expert listeners or reviewers who agree on the *stereophonic* merits of any individual stereodisc. What sounds like a glorious stereo effect in one location and setup may be a hopeless *stereophonic* flop next door in a different setup; and 2 feet difference in speaker distance, 5 degrees difference in direction and angle can decide on the success of any stereo disc in any individual location. The confusion of home setups is caused by the confusion in the two industries, and there is a good chance that the stereo medium is doomed unless we can produce something approaching satisfactorily uniform and reliable listening conditions.

"Tell us where and how you want to set up speakers at home, and we shall know how to make records"—that is the complacent and indifferent attitude of the record industry. It has permitted all the incoherent practices in the home, and there is the additional trouble that every speaker setup is rigid and permanent once it has been decided upon. With the confusion of present recording methods, even the most logical and reasonable home setup remains inefficient in 50-80% of all stereo recordings. The problem must be solved the other way: the industry will have to find out its objectives and standardize its procedures to achieve these objectives. Only then can the home user adjust his setup to meet the standardization as best his conditions will permit.

How long can we expect the pompous slogan, "Stereo is here to stay", to work? If no action is taken, the medium is likely to perish of self-starvation, because the present situation will only strengthen the resistance of the monophonic diehards who still control the most valuable section of demand and purchasing power. Here ends my manifesto. I don't know whether I should encourage questions from the floor because I am sure I don't know the answers. I am only a musicologist.

A recording of "Jenufa" is due soon from Artia.—Ed.

Some reflections on a great opera — 'Jenufa' at Chicago

AMONG ITS many exceptionally fine qualities, Leoš Janáček's great opera, "Jenufa", has one which is rare and precious—sincerity. One of the finest of twentieth-century scores, it was obviously compounded bar by bar out of a great depth of feeling for the characters of the Gabriela Preissova novel upon which it is based. These characters are made to interact on one another as completely realized human beings of dimension and depth. Such a work naturally calls for performers of great sensitivity and skill. There is no place here for sham theatrics or flashy surface values. The Chicago Lyric Opera Company, which presented two performances of the work in November as part of its regular fall season, is to be congratulated not only for having scheduled the opera but also for its careful and intelligent casting of it. The three leading roles were impeccably performed by the Dutch soprano Gré Brouwenstijn, in her United States debut as Jenufa, Covent Garden's leading dramatic soprano, Sylvia Fisher, as the Kostelnicka, and the finest of young American tenors, Richard Cassilly, as Laca. The attractive sets and costumes of Jan Brazda were on loan from Covent Garden. Christopher West, who staged the opera there a few seasons ago, was the sensitive and yet powerful director. Lovro von Matacic, the conductor, gave a masterful performance. In sum, the Chicago company was fully up to the demands of this difficult score. The opera was not just well performed—it was illuminated.

The story of "Jenufa" is, in outline, relatively straightforward. Jenufa, smitten with a powerful infatuation for Steva,

a handsome good-for-nothing, is disfigured by the knife of Steva's half-brother, Laca, who deeply loves her, when she rejects his advice and taunts him with her feelings for Steva. Jenufa's foster mother, the Kostelnicka (or Sexton's wife), conceals her until her child by Steva is born. Then, drugging Jenufa, she arranges to see Steva and begs him to marry her daughter, but he refuses because of her lost beauty. Realizing that, in any case, Laca is Jenufa's best prospect for happiness, the Kostelnicka then sees him and tells him the whole story, but when she understands that while he is anxious to marry Jenufa he rebels at the thought of accepting Steva's child, she tells him that the child is dead. Sending Laca away, she proceeds to drown the child under the ice of the mill stream. She

The moment before Laca (Cassilly) slashes the cheek of Jenufa (Brouwenstijn) in Act I of the Chicago production —Photo by Nancy Sorensen



For next month we are planning an article on Gré Brouwenstijn and her European recordings—few of which have been issued here—by Bodo Igesz, the Dutch stage director currently teaching at Juilliard.

By GEORGE LOUIS MAYER



Sylvia Fisher as the Kostelnicka

convinces Jenufa that she has been unconscious for several days with fever and that the child died during this period. Jenufa and Laca agree to marry. On the wedding day, the body of the child is discovered. The horrified Jenufa claims it as her own. The villagers, assembled for the wedding, thinking that Jenufa has murdered her own illegitimate baby, turn against her and threaten violence. The Kostelnicka admits her crime and accepts the guilt. Steva is shown as the soundrel he is, while Laca proves his worth by standing by Jenufa. The opera ends with the reaffirmation of their now meaningful and complete love for one another.

It is the fact that the drama grows out of very real characters, rather than being superimposed upon mere operatic puppets, which gives the opera its gripping tension and its stature as a real work of art. It is a love story dealing with many kinds and degrees of love. The love between Jenufa and Laca matures slowly out of the complications created by Jenufa's ill-fated infatuation. The Kostelnicka, far from being a monstrous or sinister character, is rather a great tragic figure. It is her love for Jenufa which leads her to the point of going against her deep ethical and religious convictions to get rid of the obstacle which is preventing the girl's happiness.

Of course, it is music which makes an opera stand or fall, and Janáček's eclectic

blend of late nineteenth-century romanticism and early twentieth-century modernism is in every way equal to the strength of the libretto which he himself fashioned from the novel. The music is always in tune with the dramatic situations and yet it is alive with melody—original and beautiful melody. Even at the emotional peaks, Janáček has supplied his characters with completely vocal and distinguished music to sing. Apart from the choruses in the first and last acts, the score is free from nationalistic overtones. It is real opera, not folk opera. There are minor weaknesses in the first and last acts, but the second is a masterpiece from beginning to end.

Sylvia Fisher gave a superlative performance of the Kostelnicka. Her large and powerful soprano soared easily and beautifully at the climaxes, but emerged with glowing lyricism in the quieter moments. And her diction was exemplary. However, this taxing role demands more than a superb voice, and Fisher has the maturity, the warmth and the understanding to grasp all the subtle undercurrents of the complex character, and the artistry to project them meaningfully and movingly. Again and again, Fisher made one's heart go out to this unfortunate woman. Her monologue, in which she decides to murder the child and rushes out with it, was a marvel of high-tension singing and acting. Yet how profoundly

(Continued on page 394)

Notes on a lecture by a Soviet musicologist

By JOAN PEYSER

BORIS YARUSTOVSKY is a Soviet music critic and a professor at the Moscow State Conservatory who has just spent a month traveling across the United States with several of his musical colleagues. He has a doctorate in his field and, apart from several books on dramaturgy in opera, has published a series of articles on questions of musical esthetics, on the work of various Soviet composers and, most particularly, on Russian opera.

At the end of his trip Dr. Yarustovsky delivered a lecture to music students at Columbia University. He started with an apology for speaking in Russian—making an interpreter a necessary intermediary—and then proceeded to enumerate the various divisions into which he was planning to divide the two-hour session. After asking the audience if there were any objections to his outline and receiving none, he began.

Dr. Yarustovsky first spoke of the rich operatic culture in all fifteen republics of the Soviet Union. He referred specifically to the twenty-five theaters, to the permanent casts and permanent soloists and the month-long vacation that everyone involved in opera has each year—"as in all other Soviet organizations". He distinguished between Soviet opera and Russian opera, indicating that the former, being much larger in scope than the latter, was also much richer in style, and said that despite the individual differences between many of the Russian and Soviet composers, there exist several traits in com-

mon. Among them the critic mentioned a realistic portrayal of their life and their people, an emphasis on important historical uprisings and peasant movements of the past, and an effort to educate the listener. The education is aimed towards the goodness of heart, against the evil forces of anti-humanism, and for patriotic zeal. The musicologist, author of *The Operatic Drama of Tchaikovsky* and *Classical Russian Operatic Drama*, said that with a new kind of life come many good things. He defined the modern operatic hero as someone from the people who actively fights for the new and pointed out several examples of large ensembles of male singers depicting The People which are of great significance in opera in the Soviet Union today.

Dr. Yarustovsky went on to say that this is a very special time: It is a century of great upheaval and human trial and events of major historical importance. During such an epoch it is natural for the psychology of the people to change; new horizons open, old ideals tumble, the pulse of life is different and the difference is manifested in new rhythms of psychological and physical movement. Opera of the twentieth century, he continued, cannot by-pass such movements in humanity, and he mentioned Wagner, Verdi and Mussorgsky as several composers who started the new search for forms in this genre.

The Russian speaker clasped his hands behind his back and paced continually, passing in front of the desk in order to glance both at his watch and at his notes at frequent intervals. When a particular scene was discussed, he gave a vivid pic-

Mrs. Peyser is a Columbia-trained musicologist who lives in New York City.



Shown on the steps of Low Memorial Library at Columbia University are six visiting musicians from the Soviet Union—five composers and a musicologist. From left to right are: Vladimir Ussachevsky, associate professor of music at Columbia; composers Dmitri Kabalevsky, Tikhon N. Khrennikov, Konstantin Dankevich, Fikret Amirov, and Dmitri Shostakovich; the musicologist, Boris Yarustovsky; and Otto C. Luening, professor of music at Columbia.



ture of the complete extra-musical situation involved. With appropriate facial expressions and body gestures he described that moment of agony or bliss which was the subject of the libretto and then went to the piano to illustrate its musical realization. The first time that he did this he called out, quite good naturedly, that the piano was very much out of tune, and a little later, when he chose to illustrate his point with a recording, he mused sadly that the performance was an American one and didn't quite "correspond" to the composer's intention. He said this with a smile and many students laughed.

About twenty minutes were reserved for questions. One young man asked, in a soft and tactful manner, whether "immediate appeal" was necessary in the music of the Soviet Union and if it was, did not the critic think that this might tend to lower artistic standards. Dr. Yarustovsky replied that although this question was outside the framework of "our conversation" he would answer it. He said that a vicious cycle exists: the public expects the composer to come to it with understandable music; the composer waits for the public to grow up and understand his music. In Russia there is some music for the few and then there is also "Broadway" music. ("Broad-

way" was the only non-Russian word spoken by the visiting scholar during the afternoon.) He went on to say that the composer should not be an egoist and write music only for his relatives and close friends, but should be an active creator of music that is "in between" the two extremes.

The press release on Boris Yarustovsky ends with the following information: "Dr. Yarustovsky has attended a number of music congresses, festivals, and similar gatherings abroad as a delegate from The Union of Soviet Composers." It is easy to understand why. The lecture was well organized, his delivery dynamic, and his manner charming. He dispenses information regarding the musical organization of his country in a proud and thorough way. He didn't indicate impatience or annoyance when several students left after one hour in order to go to 4 o'clock classes. He never refused to answer a question: when someone asked him about Stravinsky's position in Russia he simply stated that some of the works from his early period are still occasionally played in the small chamber halls, but that the music of his later years seems to have been composed for the sake of "novelty". He concluded with a remark that Stravinsky lost touch with his national soil a long time ago.

An outstanding achievement— Everest's 'Job'

By JACK DIETHER

THIS IS the third time that Boult has made a recording of *Job*; and since no one else has done so, and since the score is also dedicated to him, there is little doubt that he will be identified with this music for a long time. I stress the word "music" because *Job* has led something of a double life, being initially, of course, a "masque for dancing" (as the composer preferred to call it rather than a ballet), and as such has been seen many times, in Britain at least. Yet in this form the music is nearly always heard in Constant Lambert's considerably reduced orchestration designed for the average ballet pit. As with Vaughan Williams' best film music, however, the score tends

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: *Job—A Masque for Dancing*; London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. Everest LPBR-6019 or Stereo SDBR-3019, \$4.98.

to burst the theatrical bonds, and to demand an independent existence of its own. Sometimes this internal, purely musical demand came upon V.W. slowly, as in the case of his film score *Scott of the Antarctic*, which only many years later grew into the *Sinfonia Antartica*. In the case of *Job* the demand was immediate, and took the form not of musical extension, but of an expansion of the orchestral means far beyond the necessities or limitations of the theater. It is this pre-eminently symphonic conception that Sir Adrian has championed so successfully, and whose beauties he has, through the phonographic medium, disseminated far beyond the haunts of the British ballet companies.

In this case it is fortunate that listeners who have never seen it danced can, if they are interested, get at least an idea of the setting and grouping of the dances through the publication of Blake's *Illustrations of the Book of Job* (available in many libraries) which supplies, for Geoffrey Keynes' scenario, the tableaux upon which each section begins. Actually the stylized modern choreography by Ninette de Valois, while wonderfully eloquent in its own terms, has been criticized, as Frank Howes points out, in that "it does not reproduce the sweep and the almost serpentine coils of Blake's composition." Paradoxically, however, while the "anti-balletic" style was "imposed to some extent by the composer's horror of *pointes* for the drama of *Job*," the music itself has just those qualities of sweep and curve so difficult to animate on the stage, so that perhaps the recording, plus a purely imaginary "animation" of the engravings,

Scene 4 of the Sadler's Wells production — Photo by Edward Mandinian





Two further views of "Job" as mounted by the old Sadler's Wells company (now The Royal Ballet) at Covent Garden — Mandinian Photos

can do more than anything to realize Keynes' original intent. Only Robert Helpmann, who has so brilliantly performed "Satan's Dance of Triumph" in *Job* at Sadler's Wells, succeeding Anton Dolin, seems to have been able to impart to his body something of the extraordinary liquidity of Blake's swirling lines.

While the composer may have had only the vaguest idea of how William Blake could be "realized" on the stage, his musical concept was concrete and inspired. The music of *Job*, to quote Howes again, "employs the utmost freedom, but its bony skeleton is that of the suite, whose component dances, however, are not those of the fully developed French suite (Prelude, Allemande, Sarabande, Courante, Minuet and Gigue), but belong to the more primitive suite of an earlier period: Pavan and Galliard, with Sarabande and Minuet—and in one place [Pastoral Dance] Vaughan Williams hints that the social dance of Playford might add its contribution." Furthermore, by imposing on this sort of sequence not a strict unity of key, but some of the most unexpected and exhilarating modulations ever conceived by him, as at the beginning of the "Pavan of the Sons of the Morning" (G major) and of its subsequent Galliard (D major)—all in the

echt-V.W. style—the composer has epitomized the spirit of Renaissance enlightenment which Blake read into the Bible story. "Blake's God", writes Keynes, "is Divine Humanity, which he sometimes identifies as the Poetic Genius, and his Satan is constituted by the false values in Man's life, which may make mortal error even of his goodness. To him, Job's spiritual sin is one of materialism and complacency." It is the score, which I do not hesitate to suggest as one of the most beautiful to come out of England since the death of Purcell, that unifies the potential stylistic diversities of the project with the sure hand of genius.

I wish I could say as much for Everest's album cover, an especially deplorable effort to adorn a work founded, as *Job* is, on the illustrative art. I cannot fail to wonder how record producers employing the finest available skill in sound engineering can be so woefully inartistic as to permit their work to be publicly displayed through such a travesty as this combination of one of Blake's magnificent engravings, vulgarly sloshed with color, and a photographic composition of the most singular and amateurish ineptness. There is surely a monstrous discrepancy of departmental budgeting and know-how here, for if the musical contents were

John Hart as
Satan (Roger
Wood Photo)



analogous we might expect a performance on the Hammond organ, presented through a series of sound filters and echo chambers!

The case, fortunately, is quite otherwise. Sir Adrian himself, who has sometimes disappointed of late, seems on the contrary to have felt his way deeper into this score with the passing years. His sense of timing is surer, his phrasing more rhythmically articulated, and the orchestra has responded with a greater degree of assurance. The rhapsodic violin solo in "Elihu's Dance of Youth and Beauty", performed with admirable suppleness by Joseph Shadwick on the earlier LP (London 1003), is equally as grateful here as played by Henry Datyner. The almost as prominent solos for flute and oboe are even better molded than before. The latter instrument has a more nasal tone here, which may or may not be favored; I much prefer it myself. Scene VI, which introduces the alto saxophone ("Dance of Job's Comforters") and the organ ("A Vision of Satan"), is especially effective. The unctuous downward slurs affected by the saxophone are only a little less pronounced in the newer version, and when they presently return against an even oilier cello, I think listeners will agree that V.W. has created here the most convincing depiction of hypocrisy found in music.

Having seen the ballet and lived with both previous recordings, I feel that the music can be heard to distinctly better advantage in each successive version, made about seven years apart. The origi-

nal HMV 78 was striking, but without the brief though essential organ part, and also featured some quite impossible side breaks. The London LP was very welcome in these and other respects; and now Everest has made a stereophonic version that is one of the most impressive to come from that enterprising company.

Almost everything is sharper here, and altogether fuller in stereo. Consequently, I don't think I'm exaggerating to say that the stronger points of the score, of which there are many, have just about twice as much impact. The organ, however, doesn't stand out in its soloistic fashion, as it did on London, but is quite thoroughly blended into the chordal tutti. The chords are *notated* homogeneously (*ff* throughout), but frankly I think V.W. was more concerned about the rest of the orchestra there, and really intended the organ to dominate nevertheless. It is psychologically interesting that he also uses the organ near the central point of the *Antartica* (similarly introduced by a stroke of the gong), in both cases embodying the critical turning point of the drama: in one, the impassable glacial barrier that precipitates the final defeat and death of Capt. Scott, and in the other, the vision of Satan enthroned which is actually his last victory over Job before his banishment. Musically there is an even more interesting analogy in the organ part of *Job* to that of Barótk's one-act opera "*Duke Bluebeard's Castle*", also in the virtual center of the work, also apical, also the turning point, also consisting of a few strong, hymnlike chords in chromatic progressions—and also *definitely* undernourished in the opera's first, and so far only, recording.

Nothing else is missing in this third-time, stereophonic *Job* to make it an outstanding achievement in present-day recording, from the savage mockery of Satan's enthronement ("*Gloria in Excelsis Deo*" followed by "*Dies Irae*") to those delicate cymbal clashes (*ppp*, and hitherto inaudible) in the "Minuet of the Sons of Job and Their Wives", which, the record listener should be told, are synchronized with the clashing of their golden wine cups onstage.

FROM THE EDITOR:

I CANNOT explain how it happened, but one of the boxes containing addressed envelopes for the December issue was delivered at our printing plant in Easton, Pa., something over two weeks (!) after it had been mailed from New York City. On the face of it, there was negligence somewhere along the line. The ARG itself is, however, innocent, and I trust that the irate readers who wrote in to complain will accept this recital of the facts in lieu of a reply and redirect their spleen accordingly. The guilty party is the United States Post Office. . . Admirers of Jussi Björling will want to know that a discography covering the tenor's entire career has been "diligently compiled" by Rupert P. Seemungal, 116 Woodford St., Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, B. W. I., and made available by same on mimeographed legal-sized sheets. . . One of the memories I treasure is a Bruckner Ninth by the New York Philharmonic under Bruno Walter. But that was three years ago, or pre-stereo, and so Columbia has had him do it again with the same pick-up orchestra that played the Beethovens reviewed in this issue. I am crossing my fingers. . . Speaking of Bruckner reminds me that Everest has completed a Mahler Ninth in London, Leopold Ludwig conducting. (And for that label Josef Krips will do all the Beethovens, too, while I am letting secrets out.). . . Why it is that Bruckner should always remind me of Mahler I cannot say, except that their music has in common a certain logorrhea. I had better change that fast to "heavenly lengths" or risk a bout with J. D., but he knows how much I love the works of both composers. Record for record I don't suppose any others get so much space in these pages. . . A fond farewell to John Majeski, who has retired from *Musical America* after a half-century. May I take this opportunity to say of my former chief that he was all at once a canny publisher, a repository of vast intelligence, an incredibly astute speculator in artistic futures, every inch the patron, quick to smile for all his personal miseries, and withal an absolutely unique

figure. Most important, he was dedicated irrevocably to the principle of *laissez faire* as far as his reviewers were concerned; he demanded only politeness and competence. Music will miss him. Godspeed to an honorable man. . . And the very best of luck to dear Theodate Johnson, who is the new president of the corporation but by no means a newcomer to the musical scene. . . Incidentally, MA's opposite number, *Musical Courier*, being in the hands of Lisa Roma Trompeter, it is possible to say that the nation's professional music press is now controlled by ladies, if that be any solace to the girls who claim that they don't have a chance in this business. . . Who is "Discus" in *Harper's*? This kind of anonymity is infuriating: what good is criticism if you have no idea of the critic's identity? . . . In this connection I am delighted to report that Rob Lanier, who contributed to the ARG for many years and lately has been identified with *The New York Times*, henceforth will write all the audio articles for Consumers Union. The pieces will be unsigned, in accordance with the CU policy, but now the enemies of CU in the high-fidelity field, and there are many, will know at whom they are shooting. My guess is that the gunfire will abate, because there can be no argument that Rob Lanier is an objective reporter. . . Which reminds me to remark on the irony involved in the recent lambasting of magazines by Leo Burnett, head of the big advertising agency that bears his name. Burnett charged that American periodicals have reached their "lowest ebb of editorial excellence" in his forty years of reading them. Does not Mr. Burnett know how much this is due to pressure brought by advertising men? Quantity is what they want, and to hell with quality. I respectfully suggest to Mr. Burnett that he peruse the magazines *rejected* by his own media experts. He will find that editorial integrity, while battered, still survives. . . As we begin another decade I should, I suppose, have some prognosis carefully thought out and ready for presentation. Maybe next month.

—J.L.

Other Reviews

(including stereo®)

THERE IS IN SOULS a sympathy with sounds, and as the mind is pitched the ear is pleased with melting airs or martial, brisk or grave; some chord in unison with what we hear is touched within us, and the heart replies.

—William Couper

ANTHEIL: *Ballet mécanique*; **LO PRESTI:** *Sketch for Percussion*; **CHAVEZ:** *Toccata for Percussion Instruments*; **HOVHANESS:** *October Mountain*; Los Angeles Contemporary Music Ensemble conducted by Robert Craft (Antheil only), Manhattan Percussion Ensemble conducted by Paul Price. Urania UX-134, \$4.98, or Stereo USD-1034, \$5.95.

⑧ ONE of the signs of the spirit of contemporary music—in which composers labor diligently to experiment with new colors and media partly as a demonstration of their “emancipation” from old-fashioned rules and traditions—is the interest in writing for percussion instruments by themselves. No other period in Western music could have witnessed such varied and daring exploitations of these instruments as an independent type of music- (or noise-) making devices. Perhaps the granddaddy of such compositions is the famous—or infamous—*Ionisation* by Varèse, a work conspicuous by its absence in this program. Of the four works here the most celebrated is that by the late George Antheil, which used to be available on a Columbia LP. In its day (first performance 1924) it was quite a controversial piece, and Deems Taylor has described a performance at Carnegie Hall during which one member of the befuddled audience tied his handkerchief to his cane and waved it aloft as his white flag. Now, with our ears broken in to,

or down by, an even wider range of musical experimentation, this piece sounds a bit dated and even self-consciously *avant-garde*. The scoring, as used here, of four pianos, two xylophones, glockenspiel, timpani, tenor and bass drums, military drum, gong, triangle, cymbal, woodblock, large and small airplane propellers [engines included], and large and small electric bells, sounds in the aggregate like just so much noise. Yet it was Antheil's intention, so the jacket notes say, that this score should represent an escape from “the iron grasp of the tonal principle”, expressing the “barbaric and mystic splendor of modern civilization—mathematics of the universe in which the abstraction of ‘the human soul’ lives.” More substantial as purely musical works are the remaining three, each employing a range of percussion colors for different purposes. The brief piece by Ronald Lo Presti—a promising young composer of whom we ought to hear more—uses these colors in terms of melody and counterpoint and shows a clear sense of structural conception along fairly traditional lines. This is its first recording. The work by Carlos Chávez, the Mexican composer, takes advantage not only of the color of percussion instruments but also of their rhythmic potentialities, and these are employed with variegated and stimulating effectiveness. This composition is also the most recorded of the four (Boston B-207, Capitol P-8299, M-G-M

E-3155 or 3548, and Urania URLP-7144). The final piece, recorded here for the first time, is one of the more exotic products of the gifted Alan Hovhaness. In a style which is quite recognizably his own, he uses the colors of his instruments in a set of five short evocative sections of mood writing, complete with a title which he himself admits is irrelevant to the music. Not the least interest this release will attract, as undoubtedly intended, is purely sonic. The recording of the Anthel under Craft is good but not outstanding stereo. The other pieces, however, are recorded in particularly striking sound. The separation is vivid (although there is little reason for the marimba in the Hovhaness to switch sides in the middle of the work), and the clarity is very realistic. Sound bugs will be drawn by the title of the record: "Percussion!"—if not by the "cover art" as well. And they will find this interesting and offbeat release an ideal gimmick record with which to show off their equipment or torture their neighbors.

—J.W.B.

Bach on the Biggest: *Toccata and Fugue in D minor; Wachtet Auf!; In Dulci Jubilo; Toccata, Adagio and Fugue in C*; Robert Elmore (organ). Mercury Stereo SR-90127, \$5.95.

⑧WHAT seems to me objectionable is not so much the use of the gargantuan Atlantic City Convention Hall Organ for an all-Bach recital, but rather the erratic playing of Robert Elmore. Suffice it to say that blatant and musically ineffective liberties are taken throughout these pieces. Instead of using the instrument intelligently, i.e., reservedly, Elmore just blasts away. Fortunately, the two fugues here are early, thinner-textured Bach so that the polyphony retains some degree of audible articulation. The *Adagio in C*, I should add in all fairness, is registered and played with great beauty and warmth. But the size of this organ is insane. It has seven manuals—no doubt the organ bench has a motor-driven elevator arrangement to enable the player to reach those top few manuals—and pipes with fundamental frequencies rang-

ing from 8 to 14,000 cycles per second. The instrument has 455 ranks of pipes, but these ranks appear as 1,250 stops; such duplexing is useful in a small organ in order to increase flexibility but is almost pointless in a monster of this size. Mercury's sound is fabulous, the sense of space quite impressive; musically, the excesses have a Hollywoodish absurdity. See page 92 in the November, 1957, issue for the mono review. Either disc is a potential house-wrecker. —P.C.P.

J. S. BACH: *Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 in G; Brandenburg Concerto No. 4 in G; Suite No. 2 in B minor for Flute and Strings*; David Oistrakh (violin, in Concerto No. 4); Alexander Korneyev (flute, in Concerto No. 4 and Suite); Naum Zeidel (flute, in Concerto No. 4); Moscow Chamber Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Barshai. Monitor MC-2037, \$4.98.

(Concerti)	Angel COLC-13/14
Busch.....	Bach Guild 540/2
Prohaska.....	Westminster XWN-2219
Redel.....	Decca Archive ARC-3105/6
Wenzinger.....	(Suite)
Barwalder, Van Beinum.....	Epic LC-3194
Klemperer.....	Angel 55235
Scheck.....	Decca Archive ARC-3114

▲OISTRACH is, of course, duly emphasized on the jacket, even though his sole contribution consists of the first violin part of the Fourth Brandenburg Concerto. His playing is rich and assured, perhaps a little too extroverted for his role but nevertheless a good example of his superior musicianship.

The most astonishing aspect of this record, however, is not concerned with Oistrakh. The Russians, whom one would expect not to be *au courant* with the Bach style and matters baroque, apparently have progressed a great deal further than one would have expected. These are not perfect performances in appropriate tradition: among several details, the strings are too heavy in places (especially in the Third Brandenburg, where, incidentally, the two-chord second movement is played "straight", without any extemporization as in more recent interpretations), and not all the ornaments are correctly executed. But in general, with the possible exception of a rather heavy Brandenburg

No. 3, the spirit of the Russians' playing is markedly superior to many recorded versions available currently. The Suite in particular is benefited by exceptionally well-chosen tempi (although the slow sections of the Overture are taken too rapidly) and is stylistically quite admirable. The conductor, Rudolf Barshai, has evidently expended considerable time in research and study, and his achievements are well worth hearing. The recorded sound is not really outstanding but it is far from poor; the harpsichord continuo, as usual on recordings, is much too subdued. —I.K.

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J. S. BACH: *Cantata 68, "Mein gläubiges Herze"; Cantata 97, "Ich traue seiner Gnaden"; Cantata 205, "Zweig und Aeste"; Cantata 187, "Gott versorget alles Leben"; Cantata 63, "Gott, du hast es wohl gefügt"; Cantata 113, "Jesus nimmt die Sünder an"; Cantata 70, "Wenn kommt der Tag"; Cantata 157, "Ja, ja, ich halte Jesum feste"; The Bach Aria Group under William Scheide. Decca DL-9405, \$4.98, or Stereo 79405, \$5.98.*

⑧THE Bach Aria Group belongs to a school in which female contraltos still dare to sing Bach arias and pianists still dare to use their instruments to play a continuo. This frame of mind, now apparently vanishing in more precocious circles, permits a virtuoso on a modern instrument to devote himself to Bach without considering himself an anomaly. The new era of research and recording has largely banished such simplicity from the scene, and now harpsichords and viole da gamba take their turns according to Quantz, and counter-tenors double-dot their eighth notes with precision. The musicians here recorded, however, have chosen to go their own way, and they offer to those who are willing to listen, a lively disc. Considered as pure chamber music, these short pieces for voice, obbligato instrument, and keyboard are performed with a technique and abandon that escapes many practitioners of the art. Eileen Farrell, who surely possesses one of the finest voices anywhere, has all of the flexibility and freedom needed to overcome the knotty problems

that Bach raises for the singer. Carol Smith, Norman Farrow, and Jan Peerce, whose success in opera tends to obscure his natural affinity for sacred music, are among the other assets of this group. And the instrumentalists are so much beyond what one usually hears in the company of singers that one can hardly believe one's good fortune. Julius Baker, Robert Bloom, Bernard Greenhouse, and Maurice Wilk, who play the melody instruments, and Paul Ulanowsky, who plays the piano, are all musicians who have the upper hand of their craft; one would have to go far before hearing better playing than in, for example, the aria from Cantata 113. And the ensemble is excellent. Tempi are secure, balances are adjusted to a T, and phrases are curved with a gratifying unanimity of idea. But where, in all of this beautiful sound, is Bach? It is not the absence of scholarship that has driven him away, for, in the last analysis, an exciting performance is always more convincing than a correct one. It is simply that, in order to understand what any composer has to say, one must listen to a whole statement rather than a partial one. The cantatas, divorced from their relationship to the Lutheran church, are hard enough to get at. To add to the difficulty by presenting them in pieces is to obscure them further. The wonderful structures that Bach built and the new ground that he explored cannot be appreciated unless he is heard through, and any performer who forgets this will lose sight of the whole in his concern with the part. —J.B.

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J. S. BACH: *Concerto No. 2 in A minor, S. 593; Concerto No. 3 in C, S. 594; Concerto No. 5 in D minor, S. 596;* Robert Noethren (organ). Urania Stereo USD-1018, \$5.95.

⑤BEING one who prefers to hear the contrapuntally intricate and linear music of Bach enunciated clearly on an organ of the baroque type, I am happy to report that this record seems to me almost ideal. There have been far too many recordings of the older European instruments, which are often audibly defective. What a refreshing experience it is, then, to hear the

clear, clean, and mellow sound of this organ, which was built by Rudolf von Beckerath for the Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church in Cleveland, Ohio, as late as 1957. No air escapes or bad voicing here! Noethren is masterful; his style is strict, but never rigid. His rhythm is exacting, and his legato is sustained enough to prevent that horrible steam calliope effect that too many organists mistake for the baroque style. Urania's microphoning is quite close, presumably to provide clarity. But the organ itself is distinct enough, although more of the natural reverberation would have added to the stereo depth. —D.H.M.

J. S. BACH: *Tocatta in C minor; Italian Concerto in F; Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue in D minor; Concerto in D minor (after B. Marcello);* Paul Badura-Skoda (piano). Westminster XWN-18855, \$4.98.

▲THIS is a respectable, unexciting recital from probably the busiest recording pianist of today. Within the very restricted emotional and dynamic range chosen, everything is correct and proper; but the power inherent in the music requires interpretation of a much more force-

ful nature. The Concerto after Marcello is the most successfully projected of the group, being of a more gentle, relaxed character than the other three works. —H.G.

J. S. BACH: *Concerti for Harpsichord, Strings, and Continuo Nos. 1 in D minor (S. 1052) and 2 in E (S. 1053);* Ralph Kirkpatrick (harpsichord); Festival Strings Lucerne conducted by Rudolf Baumgartner. Decca Archive ARC-3132, \$5.98, or Stereo 73132, \$6.98.

(Concerti 1 & 2)
Elsner, Reinhardt.....Vox 9510
(Concerto 1)
Heiler, Caridis.....Bach Guild 588

⑤IN general, these are very correct performances which lack only a little more personality to make them completely convincing. Kirkpatrick's renditions are superlative technically, extremely clean and sure, perhaps a little dull as regards phrasing but musically and stylistically admirable. The strings (Archive's usually complete index cards fail to state how many, as well as omitting the specifications of the harpsichord) are occasionally too heavy, but this may have been a problem of recording balances, for the fairly lightweight harpsichord is sometimes drowned out by the group. In con-

The Partitas by Kirkpatrick: simply magnificent

⑤THESE three releases represent one of the finest achievements of the modern recording industry. Ralph Kirkpatrick's performances (his excellent previous survey of the Partitas on Haydn Society is now deleted) are simply magnificent;

technically beyond reproach, his playing runs the gamut from the really exciting virtuosity of the Preludes or Giges through the most tender moments of the Sarabandes. His registration is appropriate and beautifully varied, his phrasing is sensitive and clear, and his style and ornamentation are authoritative. One will not forget either Lipatti's interpretation of the first Partita or Landowska's of both the first and the second, for these are among the great recorded performances; and now Kirkpatrick's complete set, in my opinion, deserves to be added to that illustrious list. The exceptionally faithful sound of these records is a perfect complement to the musicianship of this performer. Very, very highly recommended. —I.K.

J. S. BACH: *Erster Theil der Clavier-Uebung—6 Partitas: No. 1 in B flat; No. 2 in C minor; No. 3 in A minor; No. 4 in D; No. 5 in G; No. 6 in E minor;* Ralph Kirkpatrick (harpsichord). Decca Archive ARC-3129 (Nos. 1 & 2), ARC-3130 (Nos. 3 & 4), ARC-3131 (Nos. 5 & 6), \$5.98 each, or Stereo 73129/31, \$6.98 each.

(No. 1)
Lipatti.....Columbia ML-4633
(No. 2)
Landowska.....RCA Victor LM-2194

cert performances the instrument usually does suffer in this respect, but recordings have somewhat unrealistically accustomed us to utmost clarity. Is Archive's present balance the ideal solution? Not, I think, in this case, since a less full tone in the strings during important keyboard passages would have solved the problem.

Landowska's now deleted recording of the D minor Concerto continues to be the paragon in spite of its poor sound; the E major is, I think, the least interesting of the seven concerti for harpsichord, and the Kirkpatrick reading, for all its lively tempi, rarely achieves the vigorous spirit necessary to enliven the work.—I.K.

St. Matthew in stereo—Nos. 2 and 3

J. S. BACH: *Saint Matthew Passion*; Teresa Stich-Randall (soprano); Hilde Roessl-Majdan (contralto); Waldemar Kmentt (tenor); Walter Berry (basso); Uno Ebrelus (Evangelist); Hans Braun (Jesus); Max Weirich (Peter); Friedl Kummer (Judas and High Priest I); Walter Berry (Pilate and High Priest II); Laurance Dutoit (Pilate's Wife and First Maid); Christl Zottl-Holmstedt (First False Witness and Second Maid); Karl Vogel (Second False Witness); Vienna Chamber Choirs; Boys Choir of the Schottenstift; Vienna State Opera Orchestra, conducted by Mogens Wöldike. Bach Guild Stereo set BGS-5022-25, eight sides, \$23.80.

Richter.....Decca ARC 73125-28
Scherchen.....Westminster 4402

⑧THIS second Saint Matthew in stereo is outstanding in its choral movements. The balance in the opening chorus is uncommonly good, and this sets the standard for the whole performance. The problem posed by the boy choir singing the chorale melody against so much in the double chorus and double orchestra has been splendidly solved: in older recordings, where the boys could be heard at all they have usually been all too prominent. The crowd scenes are clean and precise, yet fraught with drama, and the thunder and lightning chorus is very exciting. The great *O Mensch, bewein dein Sünde gross*, which closes the first part of the work, is sung with great affirmation, and the final *Wir setzen uns* moves along smoothly and placidly with the kind of sonic definition only dreamed of when the Grossmann and Scherchen recordings

were made. Certain matters of style should be mentioned. In this performance there is no harpsichord; the continuo is realized on the organ throughout. This may not please some Bachians, but it is defensible enough. Wöldike belongs to the school which believes in holding the fermatas in the chorales, and he allows the use of more appoggiaturas than we often hear. On the whole the soloists are the chief weakness of the performance. Erbelius, the Evangelist, sings well enough in a style that is measured but not stiff. If he does not match Haefliger's work in the Richter performance, that of Cuénod in Scherchen's, or of Karl Erb in the old 78 r.p.m. recording by Ramin, it is to a large extent because his voice in itself is less interesting. Teresa Stich-Randall is a very gifted singer, but she persists in cultivating an intimate, nay confidential, manner. Never once in this performance do we hear what her fine voice can do: it is always suppressed. This mannerism shows up the more strongly beside the open, strong singing of Hilde Roessl-Majdan. In their duet, *So ist mein Jesus nun gefangen*, the two styles are brought directly into contrast. Of all the soloists it is Roessl-Majdan who does consistently the best work. Her *Buss und Reu* is first-rate, her *Erbarme dich* an expression of exalted grief; even the difficult *Können Thränen meiner Wangen* a long aria easily ruined, is carried through successfully with a beautifully focused tone and a finely drawn line. The various bassos are competent but not much more. Braun's voice does not have all the richness desirable in the words of Jesus, and Berry is quite ponderous in the arias. Ponderous

again is the word for Kmentt, whose tone in the tenor arias suggests Wagner rather than Bach. So this release leaves us still hoping for a completely satisfactory Saint Matthew Passion. Among the stereo versions the choice is a question of superior solo singing, especially by Haefliger and Fischer-Dieskau in the Richter performance, or beautiful choral work and transparent reproduction in Wöldike's. For a safe, traditional and generally even performance some may still prefer the older Grossmann set. But on the whole, accepting its erratic moments, the Scherchen remains in many ways the most satisfactory of all.

—P.L.M.

J. S. BACH: *St. Matthew Passion*; Helmut Krebs (tenor); Franz Kelch (bass); Agnes Giebel (soprano); Renate Gunther (contralto); Hermann Werdermann (bass); Boys Chorus of the Robert-Mayer School of Heilbronn and the Heinrich Schütz Chorale of Heilbronn with the Pforzheim Chamber Orchestra conducted by Fritz Werner. Westminster Stereo set WST-402, eight sides, \$23.98.

⑤ THE PLEASURE of hearing the great St. Matthew Passion in stereo—even less than first-rate stereo—is the memory that lingers after hearing this new Westminster release. The performance has been well prepared and is of mostly good, dependable quality. Though there are no outstanding individual offerings, unless one makes an exception for Agnes Giebel, there are more-than-acceptable contributions by most of the participants. The choruses, though a bit shy of good male voices, and also the orchestra, discharge

their duties with style. The Evangelist, Helmut Krebs, is well above the routine in a difficult assignment. Scholars who insist that the organ accompany the Evangelist's recitatives will have cause for rejoicing, and most everyone will find Director Fritz Werner, organist and choir-master at Heilbronn, tasteful in his selection of tempi and in the coherence of his sonorities. Continuous urgency is, unfortunately, felt in his work only fitfully. The most serious deterrent to satisfaction in this performance is Franz Kelch, who, however well he delivers his test, seldom has the poised tone and the smoothness of line so essential for Jesus' music. The contralto Gunther also is on the rough side vocally; and her wonderful solo, *Erbarne dich*, does not make the effect it produces when performed with fine legato. The general quality of the recording has been indicated. It should be added that the pickup of orchestra and chorus is somewhat distant and that clarity of tutti is sometimes less than ideal. The strings or the tenors of the chorus will be lost to the ear during climactic moments. I expected that stereo would enhance the passages for double chorus, but it seems that the choruses were not set up for antiphonal effects. In short, this new St. Matthew Passion is no better and no worse than the other recordings we have in stereo, no one of which is outstanding. It might behoove Westminster to ask Hermann Scherchen to have another go at this score. His performance of a few years back, flawed though it may be by some inappropriate tempi, is still the most affecting on records.

—C.J.L.

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(No. 3) Budapest Columbia ML-4577
(No. 4) Barylli Westminster XWN 18122

⑧THE Fine Arts has given us another magnificent recording of chamber music with the assistance of sensibly used stereophonic techniques. These performances are, to use a highly unoriginal expression, *great!* The exquisite longing of No. 3, a quartet often overlooked among the mightier works of Beethoven's output, is played with touching warmth and clean string tone. The tempi seem ideal, and even with such close-in miking there isn't the slight fault of technique or intonation to be found. In the passionate outer movements of No. 4, there is none of the howling and screeching which has characterized the better part of my experience

with this most intense of the Op. 18 Quartets. I have heard more beautifully refined tone than this group displays, but such homogeneity of ensemble could be envied by all but two or three quartets before the public today. While the first violin is placed in the dominant position by the composer, it never rises disproportionately above the ensemble to give the effect of soloist and accompanists. Incidentally, after listening to the two sides almost to the point of exhaustion, I visited several of New York's most generously stocked record stores with the object of purchasing several others in the Fine Arts-Concert-Disc series. The largest stock I found in any store was four numbers, naturally excluding the ones I was after. I am amazed that any company with wares of such superior quality should have so mild an interest in making them available. I seem to want Concert-Disc's products more than they want my money.
—H.G.

Two views (both dim) of Scherchen's 'Eroica'

BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 3 in E flat, Op. 55 ("Eroica");* Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. Westminster Stereo WST-14045, \$5.98.

Walter, Columbia Sym. Columbia MS-6036

⑧SCHERCHEN carries liberty to the point of inanity. Speed at all costs is the order of the day, and all else—dynamics, phrasing, substance, and logic—is sacrificed for it. The breathless scramble merely to articulate clearly is finally abandoned in the coda of the fourth movement, which becomes a meaningless hodge-podge of tonality without rhythmic or phrased form and barely evidencing metric design. It is indeed a wonder that this performance was released at all since the orchestra is clearly not together and/or imbalanced on at least two occasions during the development section of the first movement, bars 140-145 of the second movement, bars 95-105 in the repeat of the first portion of the third movement, and bars 75-107 and 365-379 of the final move-

ment, as well as throughout the aforementioned coda. The break for the record turnover occurs in mid phrase (!!) during the second movement, when just one bar later (following No. 158) would have provided a natural opportunity between phrases. The stereo reproduction is rather fuzzy and lacking in focus.
—A.K.

BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 3 in E flat, Op. 55 (Eroica);* Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. Westminster XWN-18800, \$3.98.

Klemperer Angel 35328

▲OF ALL conductors Scherchen is probably the most unpredictable. He rattles through the "Eroica" at break-neck speed, without the slightest hint of flexibility or nuance. Compared to Klemperer's this tight, pinched reading (or skimming, really) is little short of preposterous. Better performances can be had for half the price.
—D.H.M.

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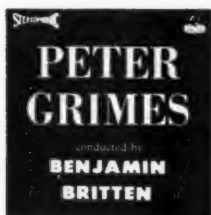
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Bruno Walter on Beethoven

BEETHOVEN'S enormous influence upon music can be likened to the effect of twentieth-century scientific enlightenment upon all our lives. Virtually every form of composition took on a new and vastly expanded meaning and structural complexity after Beethoven scaled the dizzy heights of the "Hammerklavier" Sonata, the "Archduke" Trio, the *Missa Solemnis*, the last quartets, and the Ninth Symphony. The interpretative challenge, of course, grew proportionately. For documentary purposes it is unfortunate that we have no recordings of Beethoven by Nikisch, Mahler, Wagner, or Von Bülow. In our time, certainly, only a handful of conductors can be said to have met the titan on his own level. Among instrumentalists Casals, Feuermann, Schnabel, Heifetz, and Serkin are some who have climbed this lofty pinnacle, and among symphonists must be included Weingartner, Toscanini, Furtwängler, and Walter, whose latest accounts are reviewed herewith.

For Bruno Walter this release represents a unique distinction, for not only has he previously recorded all of these works (eight with the New York Philharmonic, the "Pastorale" with the Philadelphia), an honor accorded only a few, but also

this second complete edition is the first to be released on stereo. The "Columbia Symphony Orchestra" in this case happens to be an excellent band of musicians culled from the Los Angeles area, except in the finale of the Ninth, which was recorded at Columbia's 30th Street studios in New York with a pick-up group.

Each of the great Beethoven conductors has brought different personal qualities to bear. Toscanini's presentations are dominated by an inner unrest, animation, and dramatic emphasis. Weingartner, like Walter, was mellow, but ever attentive to the classical aspects of structure and style. Furtwängler's concepts, which generally tended to be less accelerated than most, were on a noble, heroic plane. The warmth, gentleness, and worldly wisdom of Walter always have given his performances a lyric profile of vast expressivity; in his hands the second movements of these works in particular, and the "Pastorale" in its entirety, glow with a radiant songfulness. This last work is especially enriched by Walter's deftness at weaving details of phrasing, instrumentation, and counterpoint into something of rich beauty. There is no finer recording of this masterpiece, and for me none so satisfying.

Walter's "Eroica" is a spiritual concept which, in its way, is just as compelling as the more epic treatment by Toscanini or the superbly grandiose Klemperer interpretation. The Walter delineations of the First and Second Symphonies are master lessons in the art of balance. Both opening and final movements are taken at a considerable clip, and yet details of rhythmic definition, phrasing, shading, dotted notes, and tonal *bel canto* are no-

BEETHOVEN: *Symphonies* (complete); Emilia Cundari (soprano); Nell Rankin (mezzo-soprano); Albert Da Costa (tenor); William Wilderman (basso); Westminster Symphonic Choir (all in the Ninth Symphony); Columbia Symphony Orchestra conducted by Bruno Walter. Columbia set D7L-265, 14 sides, \$34.98, or Stereo D7S-610, \$41.98.

where neglected. Here, and throughout the album, Walter's preference is for less vigor and more rhythmic weight in the *scheros*. The results are sheer charm and a wonderful semblance of spontaneity, notwithstanding the fact that the tempo in the *Scherzo* of the First is notably short of the *molto vivace* called for in the text. These four symphonies, then—Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 6—are exemplary in method and effectiveness of execution.

The A Major Symphony would be on the same admirable level if it were not for the curtailed speed at which the lengthy opening movement (which is developed upon one main theme and a dotted eighth-sixteenth rhythmic pattern) is taken. The added vertical stress upon the constantly repeated rhythm taxes the sustaining power of both the melodic line and the listener's interest sometime before the double bar is reached. But the rest of this performance, culminating in a whirlwind finale, is equal to any other.

There are numerous high points of interest in the remaining purely symphonic accounts—Nos. 4, 5, and 8—but each as an entity is less than persuasive, and indeed, each can be said to have a split personality. The opening movements are uniformly dynamic and very effectively propounded, with tempi that are average or (in the case of the Eighth) slightly animated. The second movement of the Fifth, which is almost hauntingly set forth, provides a perfect contrast to the virile statement that precedes it. The corresponding portions of the Fourth and Eighth also are exquisitely molded in *con moto* fashion. But the third and final movements in each case represent an anti-climax of passive moods and phlegmatic tempi that neither sustain the spirit and strength that had come before nor supply anything of comparable validity in their absence.

In the epochal Ninth Symphony, Walter is earnest and devout—far from Toscanini's heaven-storming fervor and Furtwängler's ascetic majesty. He potent-

ly communicates the prose of the first three movements with the deep feeling of one who has made his peace with the world and its Maker. After a too-slow introduction in the final episode, lesser mortals in the form of a rather undistinguished quartet of singers intrude upon the exalted mood and mar its beauty. When she can be heard, mezzo Nell Rankin is by far the best of the soloists. The rest are quite commonplace. Emilia Cundari, the soprano, provides rather white tonalities and frequent inexactitude (both sharp and flat) of pitch. Albert Da Costa, the tenor, tends to project a pinched, glottis type of resonance without real tonality when he does not shout. William Wilderman, the basso, is plagued by an unfortunate wobble or wide tremolo. The quartet also lacks a sense of ensemble. The Westminster Choir sings well, with a minimum of forcing and tonal distortion, but it is too distantly recorded for maximum effect and proper balance. But through it all, somehow, the reverent message of a man of great simplicity, humbleness, and dedication still emerges.

Columbia has reproduced these performances in wide, clean, sound. The miking gives the strings strong presence, while the more distantly recorded woodwinds, brass, and (in the Ninth) chorus are at times not well balanced. The monitoring is all too apparent in some of the climaxes and particularly in the Fifth, Seventh, and Ninth Symphonies, where the recording levels at the fortissimi endings are considerably lower than those at which each work was begun. The handsomely bound black, white, and gold album includes a wall-size reproduction of a charcoal drawing of Bruno Walter, and a valuable, 48-page "Beethoven Reader" (edited by Fred Grunfeld, prepared by Charles Burr) containing biographical sketches, a chronology of compositions, thematic illustrations from each movement, numerous photographs, and many brief, pertinent background articles.

BERLIOZ: *Symphonie fantastique, Op. 14*; Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by René Leibowitz. Westminster WVN-18839, \$4.98.

Munch.....Vic. LM-1900
Cluytens.....Angel 35448

▲THE *Fantastique*, in the hands of a mediocre musician, can become a boring series of unrelated episodes. Leibowitz shows considerable imagination, and has reason to be proud of his accomplishment. What I miss is that last iota of haunting fascination. Munch and Cluytens come closer. Westminster's sound is clean and resonant.

—D.H.M.

BIZET: *L'Arlésienne Suites Nos. 1 & 2*; **CHABRIER:** *España Rapsodie; Marche Joyeuse*; Royal Opera House Orchestra, Covent Garden, conducted by Jean Morel. RCA Victor LM-2327, \$4.98, or Stereo LSC-2327, \$5.95.

Ansermet.....Lon. CS-6062
Paray.....Mer. 90001

⑤CAREFULLY prepared and conscientiously conducted performances. This very conscientiousness, however, robs the music of a certain spontaneity and charm which a lighter, less straightforward hand might lend to it. The orchestra is clean, clear, and for the most part well-balanced, except in the *Carillon* of the Suite No. 1. Here the carillon figure, carried by the brass, simply overwhelms the delightful string melody. The Suite No. 2 is approached in a similar fashion, and cries for a more airy texture. Morel is considerably more successful with the Chabrier pieces. The *Rapsodie*, especially, is less solidly earthbound, while the *Marche* is uninhibitedly exciting. Victor's sound is excellent, with the stereo version displaying effective depth and spread. Surface noise is annoying in softer passages.

—D.H.M.

BIZET: *"L'Arlésienne" Suites, Nos. 1 and 2; "Carmen" Suite No. 1*; Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. Angel 35618, \$4.98.

(*L'Arlésienne*)
Ormandy, Phila.....Columbia ML-5035
Stokowski.....RCA Victor LM-1706

▲KARAJAN turns in such an expressively beautiful job on some of the eight *L'Arlésienne* excerpts that it is difficult to

carp with the remainder. Considering the positive aspects first: the *minuetto* from each Suite is a gem of lyric beauty, as is the opening *andantino* of the second set. The same could be said of the opening *andante* of the first and the *adagietto* of the third, if either were supposed to be lyric rather than dramatic. Ormandy and Stokowski in particular make more of these numbers, as well as the closing *Farandole*, which lacks fire here. No complaint can be registered against the rousingly interpreted and exceedingly well played sequence from "*Carmen*". Angel's wide-range engineering is, as usual, excellent, save for a noticeable dip in the recording level during the second "*L'Arlésienne*" Suite.

—A.K.

BOITO: *"Mefistofele"*; Cesare Siepi (Mefistofele); Mario Del Monaco (Faust); Renata Tebaldi (Margherita); Lucia Danieli (Marta and Pantalís); Piero Di Palma (Wagner and Nereo); Floriana Cavalli (Elena); Chorus and Orchestra of The Accademia di Santa Cecilia (Bonaventura Somma, chorus master), conducted by Tullio Serafin. London Stereo set OSA-1307, six sides, \$17.85.

Neri, Noli, Poggi, Capuana.....Urania 230
Neri, Pobbé, Tagliavini, Questa.....Cetra 1260
(Prologue only) Moscona; Toscanini RCA LM-1849

⑤LIKE Meyerbeer, Boito was a composer who never quite trusted himself. But while Meyerbeer went on producing his very grand operas, using the trial and error method actually in rehearsals, Boito, having achieved a bitter controversy and ultimate success with "*Mefistofele*," could never quite bring himself to finish "*Nerone*". It is easy enough nowadays to belittle Boito's music by pointing out that the composer won his real immortality with the librettos he wrote for Verdi. Nevertheless, along with "*Gioconda*" (for which Boito also supplied the libretto) "*Mefistofele*" is that rare mid-nineteenth century Italian opera which, though not by Verdi, still holds the boards. To be sure, it is only an occasional repertory opera (the Metropolitan last gave it in 1926), coming and going with bassos of sufficient power and personal popularity. But "*Mefistofele*" is by

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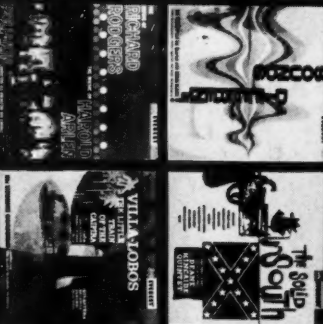
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no means a one-man opera. The roles of Faust and Margherita are both demanding and rewarding, and of course there is the Prologue. Toscanini's fondness for this large-scale choral scene is well remembered, and his recording of it seemed in most important ways definitive before it became possible to hear the music in stereo. At this point it is hardly necessary to enlarge upon this statement or try to explain it. With this advantage Serafin, no mean maestro himself, easily carries the day. But in the midst of all the heavenly choirs and those wonderful youthful cherubim looms the figure of Mefistofele, and here we have to begin making comparisons.

When I reviewed the Urania recording some years ago I am afraid I underestimated Giulio Neri (who, incidentally, died last year at the age of forty-nine). Coming back to him more recently by way of Cetra, I found him definitely in the great tradition, but the Italian tradition of Nazareno de Angelis (who was featured in the pre-war Italian Columbia recording), not that of Chaliapin. Mefistofele must dominate every scene in which he appears, and perhaps Neri's voice has been built up for this in recording (particularly by Cetra), a device rather effective than realistic. His rough tone was the personification of evil; he mouthed his words with unholy glee. After hearing this again, I find Siepi a rather mild demon, albeit a competent one. Moscona, who sang in the Toscanini Prologue, was less satisfying vocally without convincing me as Neri did. I should also mention Boris Christoff, who sang in a now discontinued Victor set, unfortunately in the manner of a lesser Chaliapin.

None of the recordings has been fortunate in its Faust. Del Monaco is quite incapable of modulating his voice; both he and Urania's Poggi work too hard in the two beautiful arias the role provides. Cetra's Tagliavini, on the other hand, with his light but somehow stiff and lachrymose voice, is too busy being artistic. As Margherita, Tebaldi easily carries off the palm. Her *L'altra notte* is as stylish a bit of singing as we are likely to hear nowadays, and she is in top vocal

form. Unfortunately she is unable to tame Del Monaco in their exquisite duet, *Lontano, lontano*; they simply do not blend. Surprisingly, at this point it is the prosaic Poggi who shows up best among the tenors. His partner, Rosetta Noli, has a sweeter and steadier voice than Marcella Pobbe in the Cetra set. If one forgets Tebaldi she is more than satisfactory throughout the Urania recording. The Helen of Troy scene was hardly a triumph in any of the older recordings, for it never seemed genuinely moonstruck. In the new it is much better balanced and Floriana Cavalli is easily the best of the Elenas. A final note of triumph for London is in the Epilogue. This time the dramatic struggle of Mefistofele and Faust is heard against the celestial chorus. Without this the opera was really inconclusive. With it, in stereo, the effect is terrific. —P.L.M.

BRAHMS: Liebeslieder Waltzes, Op. 52 and Op. 65 (Complete); Elsie Morison (soprano); Marjorie Thomas (contralto); Richard Lewis (tenor); Donald Bell (baritone); Vitya Vronsky and Victor Babin (duo-pianists). Capitol G-7189. \$4.98.

Grossmann, Akademie Kammerchor...Vox 9460

▲BASICALLY, this recording is very good indeed. Tempi are excellent, and through the use of the original vocal quartet-plus-piano-four-hands setting, rather than the large chorus with which this is occasionally augmented, the chamber character of these delightful groups is admirably retained. The four soloists sing with considerable enthusiasm, although without quite the beer hall atmosphere and *Gemütlichkeit* of the Vox recording, which in my opinion achieved a more congenial spirit than the others. Nadia Boulanger (who made recordings of the complete set separately—Op. 52, no longer available, had Dinu Lipatti as her keyboard partner) continues to sound thoroughly French in her treatment of Op. 65 (Decca 9650); similarly, the English singers tend to sound equally un-Viennese at times, and this is perhaps the only distracting factor. Vronsky and Babin achieve wonderful rapport, and

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their playing itself is a delight to hear. German and English texts are enclosed, and the recorded sound is very good.

—I.K.

•
BRAHMS: *Variations on a Theme by Haydn, Op. 56a; Academic Festival Overture, Op. 80; Tragic Overture, Op. 81;* Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Eduard Van Beinum. Epic LC-3586, \$4.98.

(Haydn Variations)
Toscanini, NBC..... RCA Victor LM-1725 (Overtures)

Walter, N.Y. Phil..... Columbia ML-5232

▲THERE are many fine things about Van Beinum's Brahms-Haydn Variations. Save for two innovations in tempo, the performance is entirely classical in concept. The quicksilveradroitness of the Concertgebouw woodwinds make the fifth variation, taken at a real *vivace* tempo in 6/8 time, a weightless delight. In the eighth variation these instruments expertly blend with the strings in beautifully executed counterpoint at *presto* tempo and in hushed dynamics. The horns, both solo in the third variation and in quartet

in the sixth, produce cleanly and with crisp sonority. The first instance of an unorthodox tempo occurs in the fourth variation (in B flat minor), where more heed is paid the *con moto* written over the first bar than the *andante* which precedes it. The main drawback of the faster pace is the consequent lessening of contrast between more rapid major key variations that come before and follow. In fairness, however, it must be said that Van Beinum's meticulous phrasing and warm melodic exposition help considerably. A more detrimental liberty in tempo is taken in the fugal finale, for the greater animation here robs the coda of needed contrapuntal definition and much of its nobility. I repeat that there are many fine things about this interpretation, but the finale, delivered as it is, ends matters rather anticlimactically. The *Academic Festival* receives a robust reading after getting off to a slow start. The *Tragic* is deeply felt and beautifully delivered in all respects. The entire album is capably engineered.

—A.K.

Lateiner: logic and blazing virtuosity

I HAD begun to despair for this remarkable record. It had been scheduled for issue three years ago. Then the original catalogue number was reassigned. And after all this time in the "ice box" it seemed a certainty that the arrival of stereo would make the incarceration permanent. Now, unexpectedly, the long-awaited release is a reality. I strongly urge all interested parties to acquire this disc at once. It is a treasure.

I should stipulate that my hyperbole applies only to the performances. The surface noise on my review copy can be endured only with much twirling of dials. The recorded sound itself is wretched, even by the standards of yesteryear. And the instrument chosen (certainly not by the artist?) has an ugliness of timbre that does a frightful disservice to the noble name of Steinway.

Moreover, as if these militations were not dissuading enough, Westminster's music director (Kurt List) apparently did not notice or in any case did not rectify an obvious, hideous, and unusually stupid editing error in the Handel—to wit, the first half of the fourth variation is heard *after* the second half, and only once at that, while the second half is heard not twice but three times. In other words, the repeated halves come out in the absurd sequence of 2-1-2-2 instead of the proper 1-1-2-2. Horrors!

No matter. I still insist that this is an historic recording, not only for its documentary interest in subsequent appraisals of the Lateiner art but also, and emphatically, for the musical value delivered. To start with, this is literally the most economical version of the two works because it is currently the only one that presents them in tandem, where

they belong. And of the otherwise coupled but nominally competitive performances none, it seems to me, is in the same class. Of the four pianists who have given us the Op. 24, only Fleisher and Istomin even approach the strength of conviction demonstrated by Lateiner, and both Anda and Keene make extensive cuts in the Op. 35 (I do not know the Monitor recording by Merzhanov), whereas Lateiner presents the work in its entirety. (The fascinating Moiseiwitsch and Solomon versions of old, never having been transferred to LP, are of course out of the running altogether.)

What is to me especially impressive about these concepts, however, is not so much Lateiner's terrifying technique as his total musicianship. True, for all the power of projection involved there is a virtual effacement of self, an absence of "interpretation" in the usual sense, and ordinarily one would deplore a performer's foregoing this prerogative. But always there is logic—real thought—behind this blazing virtuosity. And always there is the most careful attention to detail without the slightest sacrifice of line or color.

Unlike at least one other pianist who regularly plays these works (but who has not recorded them, fortunately), Lateiner does not make the mistake of "going back to the autograph". The first printed edition is good enough for him, or any standard edition without capricious or arbitrary departures. For it is actually important to avoid the autograph with Brahms in particular if one is not to misrepresent the composer's intentions. Brahms was forever making small changes on his scores as they went from manuscript through various stages of proofing—not in the notes themselves, but in agogics, in subtle revisions of such vital minutiae as dots and ties. It is Lateiner's fastidious observance of these markings, not as initially set down or as "fingered" by an editor but precisely as approved by the composer, that makes these performances into glowing re-creations. Angels could no more.

—J.L.

BRAHMS: *Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Handel, Op. 24; Variations on a Theme of Paganini (Books I & II), Op. 35*; Jacob Lateiner (piano). Westminster XWN-18870, \$4.98 (mono only).

BRUCKNER: *Symphony No. 5 in B flat* (Original Version); **WAGNER:** *Prelude and Good Friday Spell from "Parsifal"*; Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Eugen Jochum. Decca D.G.G. set DGMA-300, \$9.96, or Stereo DGSA-7300, \$11.96, four sides each.

Pfäfer, Leipzig.....Urania 239
Knappertsbusch, Vienna.....London 1527/8

QUITE A LONG while ago, Sir Donald Tovey expressed the hope that performances of Bruckner, one of the few symphonists with a "Wagnerian time-sense", might one day supersede the tasteless concerts composed of "bleeding slices of butcher's meat chopped from Wagner's operas". His wish has not been fulfilled. Bruckner is a good deal more with us today than he was then, but Tovey could scarcely have foreseen the recent penchant of LP record makers for filling out Bruckner albums with these very same "Wagnerian meat slices" (euphemistically called "extracts")! Of those which he characterized as dying of exhaustion in a tonal region "which, like that of the beginning, is nowhere in particular, but different inasmuch as it is elsewhere," he cited the Good Friday Spell from "*Parsifal*" as a shining example. And the sequence of *Prelude and Good Friday Spell* makes no more musical sense than the tautological, and even more popular *Prelude and Love-Death* from "*Tristan*". This will do for the unseeking, unheeding pop-concert atmosphere. But Bruckner simply doesn't belong in that atmosphere, and it is small wonder that both Jochum and Knappertsbusch frequently have little feeling for his inner structural logic, when they can willingly join the horde in perpetuating such butchery on his "beloved master".

Jochum has recorded the Fifth Symphony before (a deleted Capitol-Telefunken), and the Knappertsbusch album appeared in 1956, with the routine "*Götterdämmerung*" fragments as encores. The latter's Bruckner is inclined to be glib (Cf. the *Adagio*), and he plays in addition the revised, often called "Wagnerized" versions of the symphonies; thus he respects the essence of the original symphonist as little as that of Wagner

the music-dramatist. For it was Bruckner's "betters", his close associates Ferdinand Löwe, the brothers Schalk, etc., who "for his own sake" made him conform to more polite conventions of the time by scaling down his abruptnesses with *diminuendi*, *ritardandi*, and so on, as well as by changing the music itself: the form, the orchestration, even some of the harmonies. And of all his works, the Fifth and Ninth are the best places to observe the picayune minds of the revisionists at work—gouging out here, backing and filling there, subtly reshaping an original mind with a thoroughness and persistence that would do credit to a modern brainwasher. It is as well that their piece of work on the Fifth Symphony has been preserved in the Knappertsbusch recording, lest future generations refuse to believe the rumors of that time. These petty corruptions were inflicted, in dead seriousness. And if the arrangers' only concern was to get Bruckner performed, they might at least have commended the real Bruckner to the future, just as Rimsky-Korsakov expressed the hope, in the preface to his score of "*Boris Godunov*", that one day his "*Boris*" might at last be superseded by Mussorgsky's. No such reservations disturbed Bruckner's disciples, for when Löwe published the Ninth, eight years after the composer's death, he pretended that he had been busy all that time deciphering the autograph (actually a model of clarity), instead of rearranging it. Presumably this was on the theory that since he was able to get the living Bruckner to accede to his modifications, why not his departed spirit?

Jochum, however, does conduct the *Bruckner-Gesellschaft* scores, and here some further paradoxes appear in regard to the new Fifth. For while the recording is clearly marked "Original Version", Joseph Braunstein's album notes make no attempt to show why this is to be preferred: quite the contrary. The writer never comes to grips with the "textual problem" of this work, or compares the two very different versions in any way, but extols at some length, in broad terms, the virtues of Löwe and the Schalks over

the criticisms by Robert Haas, the original *Gesellschaft* editor, of the part they played in its publication, just before Bruckner died. To speak by the cards, Braunstein seems to be temperamentally quite at variance with his nominal assignment as annotator of *this* edition, and the resulting equivocations must surely be as puzzling to novices as irritating to out-and-out "O.V." admirers.

There are times, to be sure, when one feels like saying the same of Jochum himself. His habit of pulling tempos about, in ways not authorized in the edition he is conducting, frequently suggests a secret hankering after the old ways. There is not so much of this in his Fifth, but truly it doesn't take very much to throw the work out of kilter. In the outer movements, the conventional forms are so fragmented by Bruckner's pauses that any attempt by the listener to assimilate the music in the classical tradition inherited by Brahms can only result in a frustration verging on collapse, and should nowise be encouraged. There are in fact just two places in the gigantic finale where classical ideas of transition and continuity are adhered to by the composer. One is the great 163-bar fugue which forms its development section. The "R.V.", as used by Knappertsbusch, replaces Bruckner's distinctive symmetry with a "safer" kind by removing thirty bars of this fugue (truly "the most unkindest cut of all", right to the heart), and by dispensing with two sections of the ensuing reprise (another 86 bars), so that the fugue is almost attached to the coda. The other place is the coda itself, leading up to and concluding with the stirring, energizing chorale that sweeps through and over the main themes. Jochum checks his momentum so drastically, just at the crucial entry of the chorale, that there is no longer any sense of urgency in it, merely the solemn consecration of a monumental dullness. (The finale has, among other things, a saucy humor, and if Bruckner weren't supposed to be so reverent toward the older masters, I would swear its opening was kidding the pants off the corresponding part of Beethoven's Ninth.)

Though in different ways and different

degrees, I therefore think the Knappertsbusch and Jochum approaches both do this symphony some disservice. But fortunately there is on record an effective answer to both of these renowned impresarios, in the person of an otherwise obscure conductor from Leipzig named Gerhard Pflüger. Urania, which did not even bother to designate this "Original Version", since that was no popular cause at the time, and evidently no one in the front office knew or cared, is none the less to be congratulated for preserving in its catalogue this little-heralded but excellent presentation. It is better recorded than either Decca or London, especially in the bass; thus text, interpretation, and engineering are alike superior in this hideous old box: a true case of "a rose . . . born to blush unseen, and waste its sweetness. . .", etc. One of the finest Bruckner recordings to date, it is the only Fifth to stand beside the long-gone 78 r.p.m. set by Karl Böhm. And the album is filled out not with more Wagner appendages, but with the only recording of Weber's First Symphony.

Further, my preference for Urania's over Decca's sound applies much more strongly in comparison to the Decca stereo pressing. However fine in other respects (and I certainly agree that Bruckner benefits exceedingly from stereophonic sound), this one has the worst case I have yet heard of bass compression for stereo mastering—I would incline to say that stereo has mastered *them*. Anyone who can get a moment's access to both of Decca's pressings together can easily check this fact for himself; the opening bars of either the first or last movement will suffice. Both lead off with the same soft passage in the lower *pizzicato* strings, clear though unresonant in the mono, but virtually indistinguishable from the ordinary *very slight* surface noise on the stereo. The latter effect is so bad I couldn't tell exactly where either movement began, even at maximum gain! I suspected it might be otherwise on the original D.G.G. pressings from Germany (SLPM-138-004/5), since the European reviewers hadn't mentioned it. W. S. Mann wrote in *The Gramophone*, in fact, that the stereo

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pressings were "so good that one of the most eloquent effects is dead silence punctuated by a soft woodwind call or a plucked string". So I made a spot check on the opening record at an import shop, and found the German stereo to be infinitely superior; in fact it seems almost incredible they could both have come from the same tape. The same response that failed to respond at all to Decca can be heard most sonorously—nay, *felt* through the very floor—when properly engineered. Don't be fooled, therefore, by Decca's spurious new attempt to capitalize on the growing international renown of the D.G.G. name. The significant words on the label here are "manufactured by

Decca Records, Inc., N. Y., U.S.A.", and there is an ocean of difference. So if you do fancy Jochum's Bruckner in stereo, import it.

Since I am not Good Friday Spellbound, I obviously have all the more reason to prefer that Decca (and D.G.G. in Europe also this time) had taken four sides for the Bruckner instead of three, and not have had to straddle its noble *Adagio* across sides 1 and 2. (The other three-sided versions have no need of this, the tempos being faster.) I kept thinking as I listened to the Wagnerian side of this album that a complete "*Parsifal*" in stereo, or even the Prelude and complete Grail Scene, will be something to con-

Busoni played—and repaid—by Egon Petri

BUSONI: *Fantasia Contrappuntistica*; **BACH-BUSONI:** *Sleepers Awake; In Thee Is Joy; I Call To Thee; Christians, Rejoice*; **BACH-PETRI:** *I Step Before Thy Throne, O Lord; Minuet (S. 841/2/3); Sheep May Safely Graze*; **BUXTEHUDE-PETRI:** *Now We Thank Thee*; Egon Petri (piano). Westminster XWN-18844, \$4.98.

(Fantasia)

Brendel SPA 56

▲HAVING teetned on the old Columbia Petri shellacs of the Bach-Busoni transcriptions, I have a sentimental attachment for this spanking new edition, especially since the sound of the 78s was not good even for their period. So here again, the once familiar Petri (and Busoni) idea of pianized Bach—straight-forward and impersonal, alive and massive. Although their original purpose (making Bach works better known to the concert-going public) is happily not now so urgent as it once was, it is good to have this grouping before us as a memento that it has not been so long, after all, since piano transcriptions were necessary.

Busoni's later compositions are refined by the same fires of the Germanic mystical torch that passed from Bach, Beethoven, and Liszt, through Pfitzner and Busoni's pupil Kurt Weill in more operatic quanta, and which are still faintly aglow today in the works of, say, Heinrich Kaminski.

The *Fantasia Contrappuntistica* is a non pianistic contrapuntal complex built mainly on an imaginative working out of the incomplete final fugue in Bach's *Art of Fugue*. In his monumental realization of the *Fantasia*, it is as if Petri had been saving his whole life long to pay an enormous debt to his old teacher Busoni. Where even the virtuosic Busoni never considered this to be playable, but simply a work born of theory and love that happened to be written so that it *might* be played on the piano, Petri almost persuades you that it is a piano piece, and furthermore, one of such intensity that it requires a torrent of technique to satisfy it. Withal there is of course a devotional undertone, which Petri allows to appear when possible. Brendel, on the other hand, never allows this unique work to get beyond this mystical frame, and his searching and proportioned fusion of poetry and religious quest, his total relevance to this single frame—while unimpeachable in its integrity—is apt to drive the listener a bit berserk. As in listening to Messiaen's *Vingt regards*, our madness lies in the suspicion that we know what the composer is trying to say and also that the piano is incapable of translating it. Brendel must find this out—Petri knows it. The piano is a medium, not a Medium.

—J.B.L.

template indeed. The domed hall of Monsalvat, one of the glories of Bayreuth, has always seemed cribbed and maimed by the inescapable flatness of monophonic listening. Jochum certainly has all the requisite absorption for this music, and the Prelude itself retains much of the intense beauty and expectancy we feel in the theater. Only in the present context does it begin to seem like a mere appetizer for the wrong meal. Wagner was very particular about where and when "*Parsifal*" was to be played, and Mahler had the good sense to obey him to the letter. We cannot take such a reverent view of it, but let it be at least an artistic one.

—J.D.

CHOPIN: *Mazurkas* (complete); Nikita Magaloff (piano). London Stereo set CSA-2303, six sides, \$14.98.

⑧MAGALOFF is and has been for over a quarter of a century a fine musician and a well-schooled pianist. My first memory of him is as an expert accompanist to Joseph Szigeti in a magnificent Columbia disc of the Mozart Violin Sonata, K. 304, issued before World War II. Over the years I have heard him occasionally on his infrequent visits to this country. He has left an impression of a stylish workman in the music of Mozart and he has given us a sense of fulfillment in his playing of the Russians (I recall in particular Magaloff's fiery performance of the three scenes from *Petrouchka*). But he has never struck me as a persuasive purveyor for the Chopin literature, and this recording reveals no new facets of his ability in this area. Magaloff presents these mazurkas in a restricted salon framework. To be successful with this point of view, the pianist must have a broad tonal palette and extreme sensitivity to the many changes of mood with which these pieces abound. Magaloff has a serviceable tone, but it is somewhat neutral as regards color; his temperament is not of the volatile sort that permits a wide range of personal comment. Accordingly, he is most successful in those mazurkas that are restricted to a single mood. Magaloff has been accorded competent engineering support; the sound of his piano is clear

without a truly impressive sense of immediacy.

—C.J.L.

DONIZETTI: "*L'Elisir d'Amore*"; Hilde Gueden (Adina); Giuseppe di Stefano (Nemorino); Renato Capecchi (Belcore); Fernando Corena (Dulcamara); Luisa Mandelli (Gianetta); Chorus and Orchestra of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, conducted by Francesco Molinari-Pradelli. London Stereo set OSA-1311, six sides, \$11.96.

⑧WHEN the monophonic version of this performance appeared some two years or so ago it seemed to me the best we had had of Donizetti's delightful comedy, despite certain fine details in the now no longer available HMV recording conducted by Santini. As a performance this still seems to me the best, and with the added dimension of stereophonic sound there can be little question. Gueden makes a thoroughly charming Adina, though as a florid singer she just misses being in the very first class (though no longer young, Carosio in the HMV set outdid her in this respect); di Stefano sounds better to me now than he did when I heard the performance before. He sings *Una furtiva lagrima* with good taste and tone, and he makes a credibly simple character. Capecchi might perhaps get a little more from his fine natural voice; his production is inclined to be thick. Corena, in the buffo role of Dr. Dulcamara, could hardly be matched in any opera house today. He not only makes the character realistically absurd, but he sings. And Luisa Mandelli, in the small role of Gianetta, deserves praise for delivering her aria with real charm. Once or twice it seemed to me the voices were crowding the microphones; there is one unison high B flat for Gueden and di Stefano which gave some trouble. Otherwise, and for very much the most part, the reproduction is splendid.

—P.L.M.

DONIZETTI: "*La Favorita*"; Giulietta Simionato, soprano (Leonora); Gianni Poggi, tenor (Fernando); Ettore Bastianini, baritone (Alfonso); Jerome Hines, bass (Baldassarre); Piero di Palma,

tenor (Don Gasparo); Bice Magnani, soprano (Ines). Chorus and Orchestra of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino conducted by Alberto Erede. London stereo set OSA-1310, six sides, \$17.98.

§COMPOSED in 1840, "*La Favorita*" was one of Donizetti's last operas. Though the world was yet to hear ten more works from this prolific master, Donizetti was nearing the end of his life; his sixty-fifth and final opera was produced in 1844, and he died in 1848. "*La Favorita*" is one of its creator's fine tragic operas; from the day of its première, several of its arias have been sung by nearly every well-schooled operatic mezzo, tenor, baritone, and bass. It is capped by a superb last act, most of which Donizetti is known to have written in the flash of a few hours. The availability of the opera on records, however inadequate some of the performance may be, has been a blessing. Now it is at hand in stereo, and the strengths of the productions are considerably enhanced. Simio-

nato is more effective, even if she does little to erase memories of Stignani and other older mezzos in the part of Leonora. Bastianini and Hines seem to have even more vocal velvet, if not the elegance of phrasing, powerful projection, and equality of scale that their roles require. In the orchestra one gets a coherence in sonority that was not always present in the mono version. The two greatest drawbacks are still Poggi and Erede, and stereo cannot make them more acceptable. —C.J.L.

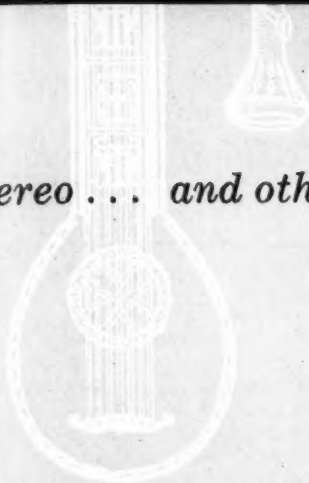
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DVOŘÁK: *Symphony No. 5 in E minor* ("New World"); Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. Capitol SP-8454, \$5.98.
Kubelik, Vienna.....London St. 6020
Reiner, Chicago.....Victor St. LSC-2214
§CLEAN, efficient, and uninspired. By comparison to the Kubelik, Reiner, or (mono) Toscanini versions, it is pallid indeed. Capitol's stereo sound is, however, superb. —D.H.M.

'Lucia' again: struggles and sheer intelligence

DONIZETTI: "*Lucia di Lammermoor*"; Maria Meneghini Callas (Lucia); Ferruccio Tagliavini (Edgardo); Piero Cappuccilli (Enrico); Bernard Ladysz (Raimondo); Lenard del Ferro (Arturo); Margareta Elkins (Alisa); Renzo Casellato (Normanno); Philharmonia Chorus and Orchestra, conducted by Tullio Serafin. Angel Stereo set S-3601 B/L, four sides, \$11.90.

§IT is not very clear to me exactly why this recording was made. "*Lucia*" is hardly the kind of opera in which one looks or listens for realism, yet aside from the stereophonic sound (which in this case does not run to any spectacular effects) I can hear little that could be called an advance on the admired Callas-Serafin recording released several years ago by Angel. True, the big ensembles and choruses sound grand and spacious here, but if one returns to the older effort one finds it by no means substandard in these respects. As for Callas herself, I am afraid she has not added any cubits to her stature with this new version. In the first act she struggles with her tones in a man-

ner often downright painful. After such a beginning it comes as a distinct surprise that she is still able to carry the day in the Mad Scene by the sheer intelligence of her approach. Somehow at this point the drama comes to life. And here the voice assumes again a semblance of its form at the time the older recording was made. But aside from the lady herself, the supporting cast is hardly comparable to the singers who shared honors with her before. Gobbi, a great singing actor, is replaced by Cappuccilli, a mediocre baritone on this evidence, with not much of either polish or style. Tagliavini, succeeding di Stefano, sings rather preciously in his full-throated but sentimental manner. In the first act his voice refuses to blend with Callas', and his treatment of *Verrano a te* is in too strong contrast to hers. Ladysz and Casellato are adequate in their parts; on the other hand Elkins displays a richer voice than we usually hear in the role of Alisa. As Arturo, del Ferro is virile if a bit rough. Serafin, of course, holds things together, and orchestra and chorus are good. —P.L.M.



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A provocative and rewarding 'Israel in Egypt' from Vox

WHEN I pass to whatever reward in the hereafter awaits the toiling record critic I hope that mine will take the form of a recording of this, one of my very favorite works, that is perfect in every way. Apparently that is the only way I will ever get such a thing, for this masterpiece seems to be hexed here among the mortals.

The history of this work on records is a frustrating and uneven affair. First came a British version conducted by Goehr for the old Handel Society (HDL-1, out of print), uncut but a somewhat weak performance in shallow sound. Then a very good Berlin performance under Koch for Bach Guild (BG-521/2), but cut, and in German. Of the revolting misrepresentation by Sargent (Angel BL-3550, 35386/7) the less said the better. Then a year ago this past spring there appeared the first gleam of hope when Westminster released the recording made by the enterprising Utah forces under Abravanel (XWL-2224; see ARG, May, 1958, pp. 391-2). It had its faults—weak soloists and a number of regrettable cuts—but it was a performance of real spirit and majesty, well recorded, that did some justice at last to Handel's stupendous music. Subsequently Westminster released the stereo version of this recording, which adds more to its value.

Now we have this new entry into the field, which is in reality a recording of an

actual concert performance that took place in Carnegie Hall on the evening of Tuesday, May 12, 1959. I was unable to attend the concert itself, but I did hear a radio broadcast of it which did not impress me—perhaps partly because of very poor microphone placement. It is very pleasantly surprising, therefore, to find that the recording derived from this performance not only dispels pessimistic expectations but even leaves them far behind.

Not that this version is without its own faults, too. Some of Boepple's tempi raise one's eyebrows no small height. No. 6, "They loathed to drink of the river", is marked in my score as *Largo assai* (even if *alla breve*), and so it is usually performed; but it emerges here more as *Allegro alla marcia ben marcato*. This same kind of overly brisk pace spoils No. 16, "And believed the Lord", and prevents it from becoming the grand peroration to Part I that it should be. The jogging, staccato fashion in which the splendid No. 11, "Egypt was glad when they departed", is pounced upon robs it of all its soaring majesty. Boepple also takes a few liberties with the instrumentation, though not so serious as to be a major issue; and by way of compensation he is the only conductor on records to give the solo numbers the proper chamber instrumentation where it is called for.

But the worst offense of all is the handling of No. 22, the duet "The Lord is a man of war", a favorite target for over-imaginative (or budget-conscious) conductors. The two bass soloists called for are dispensed with and the music is assigned to the male sections of the chorus. The fact that these Dessoff men sing it with remarkable precision and vigor does not alter the fact that this practice—resorted to on records so far only by Sargent, who was hopeless anyway—is

HANDEL: *Israel in Egypt*; Miriam Burton (soprano), Betty Allen (contralto), Leslie Chabay (tenor), Robert Conant (harpsichord), Bruce Prince-Joseph (organ), the Dessoff Choirs and Symphony of the Air conducted by Paul Boepple. Vox set PL-11.642, four sides, \$9.96, or Stereovox set STPL-511.642, \$11.90.

Abravanel.....Westminster set 2224; (St.) 207

By JOHN W. BARKER

totally inexcusable. The same people who shrug off this nonsense as excusable or acceptable would writhe in agony if they had to put up with the absurdity of any familiar operatic aria treated in such fashion. One can appreciate perhaps the economic drawbacks for a group of this sort to have to engage two soloists for a whole evening to sing but one duet; but in view of the fact that this performance was to go beyond one concert hearing and into a recording to be released commercially, some effort should have been made to satisfy the requirement of the score.

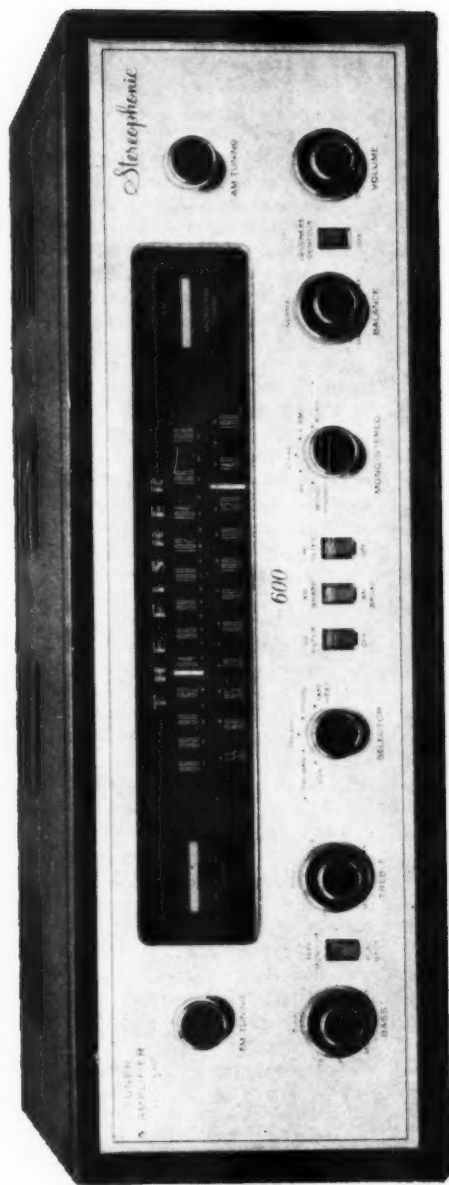
Even with these faults, this new set makes a generally fine impression, and gives the only other one on the market worth considering some very stiff competition. Boepple's female soloists (and again in pursuit of economy, the second soprano is dispensed with and her part taken by the contralto) have no better voices than Abravanel's, but they are better musicians, and Miss Allen, for all her lack of color, endows an air like No. 5, "Their land brought forth frogs", with real meaning. The Hungarian-born tenor Leslie Chabay is even more of an asset. Collectors will recall his Magyarized English in the old Handel Society recording (HDL-13) of *Alexander's Feast*, but they will also recall his splendid singing there. Here again, in spite of his rather thick accent (after all, many of Handel's original soloists in his oratorios were not to the language born), he turns in a very satisfying performance.

The real test of an *Israel* recording, however, is of course its chorus, and this was the strongest quality of the Westminster recording. But here, too, the Dessoff recording has distinct recommendations. Indeed, this is many times over the finest singing this chorus has ever done on records, and aside from a somewhat weak

alto line (a trouble with many choruses) it is easily a match for anything many professional choruses can do.

In this matter, too, the Vox release is enhanced by particularly excellent recorded sound which would have been outstanding enough as a product of regular recording sessions, but as a taping of a live performance is nothing short of miraculous. Curiously enough it is the Symphony of the Air that sounds a little rough, if anyone does, but perhaps this is the result of little enough rehearsal time for smoothing things out, and also of close miking. The performance as a whole comes through remarkably well thanks to the superb clarity of this sound, complete with a bass of clarion firmness—as my neighbors will attest. Stereo is, of course, the only proper medium for a work so riddled with double choruses, and while the effects are not always so completely successful as one might like, they are generally better than those in the Westminster release. In the latter the chorus is recorded with much less clarity and sounds a bit more obscured by comparison. Also, the Westminster balance is often artificial and plainly contrived, as in the strange lopsidedness of the straight four-part choruses. By contrast in these latter the realities of concert performance forbade any fancy location-juggling for the Dessoff version, and so one can hear plainly the sound of two distinct choruses singing the same parts.

In the over-all analysis Abravanel's sound is more polished, and his interpretation has more power, revealing the sweep and grandeur that make this music the overwhelmingly thrilling experience it ought to be. Boepple's interpretation has less of this momentum, but on the other hand it has a greater appreciation for, and realization of, details, and they are much enhanced by the wonderful clarity of the sound. While one may not always agree with his approaches, there is no denying that everything is done imaginatively and that the results are lively and stimulating. Moreover, a particularly strong advantage of this new version is that it is absolutely uncut, which is not true of any of the other releases



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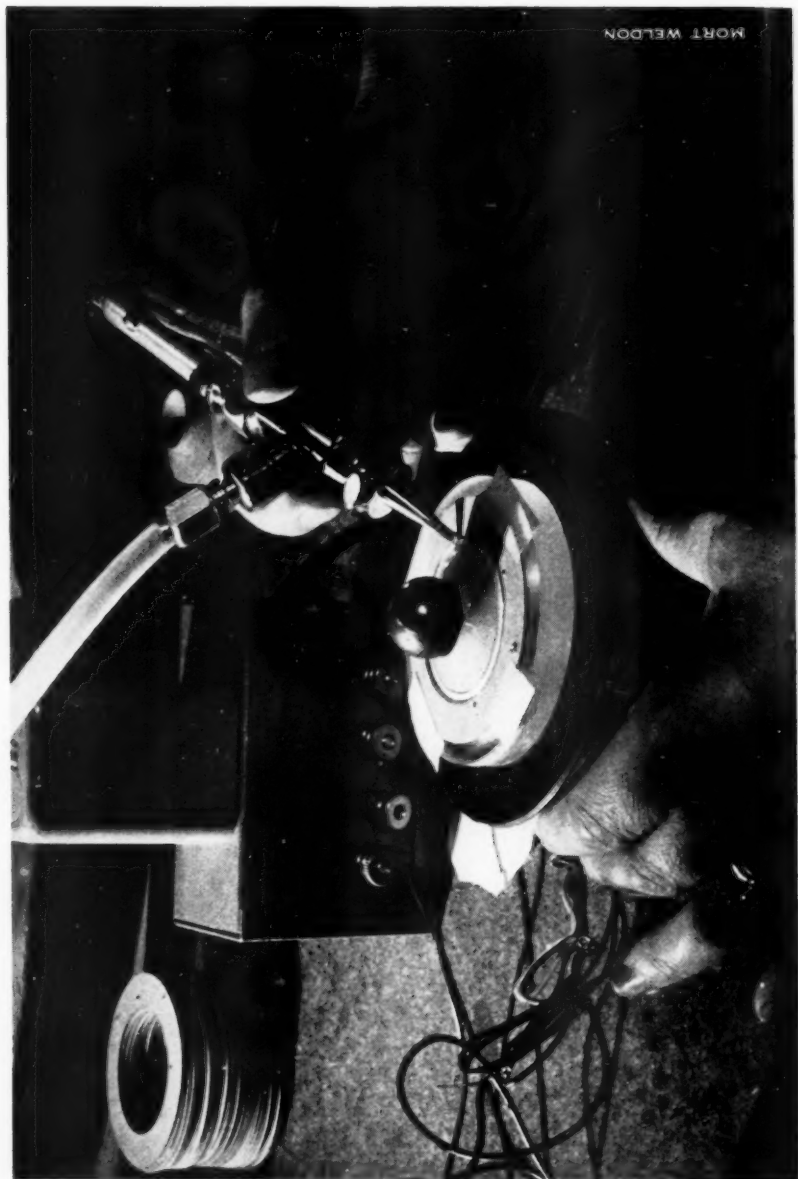
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still available. (One might add that the accompanying annotations are particularly excellent, understandable in view of of their having been penned by none other than our Noble Editor.)

It is impossible, however, to make any clear-cut choice between this new recording and the Westminster set. It is easy enough for a reviewer to advise having both, because he gets his review copies for nothing. But readers are not likely to be in such a fortunate position. Perhaps the best I can do is to suggest that those unfamiliar with this music can be best introduced to it by the refined magnificence of Abravanel's forceful exposition; whereas those sufficiently acquainted with the work so as not to be led astray by the shortcomings of this new version may find it a more provocative and more rewarding experience—and will be glad also to hear the entire score. In short, despite its flaws this is a recording of which the Dessoffs can justly be proud.

●
KHACHATURIAN: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra*; **SAINT-SAËNS:** *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso, Op. 28*; Mischa Elman (violin); Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Vladimir Golschmann. Vanguard VRS-1049, \$4.98, or Stereo VSD-2037, \$5.95.

⑧ELMAN makes his debut on Vanguard with this record. Both of his interpretations here are individualistic, occasionally on the slow side, as in the last movement of Khachaturian and the Saint-Saëns, but extremely impressive. Elman's rich tone and his feeling for line are extremely well reproduced, and he has received most satisfactory support from Vladimir Golschmann. The sound, itself, even with a somewhat closely miked solo violin, is highly superior. —I.K.

●
LOCATELLI: *4 Concerti Grossi, Op. 1: Nos. 8 in F minor; 9 in D; 11 in C minor; 12 in G minor*; Felix Ayo and Anna Maria Cotogni (violins); Bruno Giuranna, (viola); Enzo Altobelli (cello); I Musici. Epic LC-3587, \$4.98.

(Op. 1, complete)

Eckertsen.....Vox DL-333

▲THOSE who want only a sampling of the Op. 1, rather than the complete

twelve recorded by Vox, would be well advised to look into this disc. All four works are excellent examples of this splendid composer's style, which has much in common with that of Corelli, and the playing of I Musici, with its

rich string tone, leaves almost nothing to be desired. The harpsichord continuo, even though somewhat reticently recorded, is very well executed, adding considerably to the baroque spirit of these performances. —I.K.

Szell's Mahler: very highly recommended

SIR WILLIAM Walton's Partita was commissioned by Szell, along with nine other works from various countries, for the 40th anniversary season of the Cleveland Orchestra (1957-8). It proved to be a happy idea, as shown by its English première in the same season under Barbirolli, and by this recording only a year later. The Partita was composed in Walton's home in Ischia, Italy, and abounds in the vitality and sunny disposition familiar in some of his overtures such as *Portsmouth Point* and *Scapino*, the latter infused with the spirit of the *Commedia dell' Arte*. It is a 15-minute work for middle-sized orchestra (with plenty of percussion), in three movements: *Toccata*, *Pastorale Siciliana*, and *Giga Burlesca*.

The evocation of Italian baroque implied by this scheme leans more to the modern example of Busoni than of Respighi. In the opening *Toccata*, Walton's combining of tricky rhythms with piquant minor-major alternations at high speed is used to convey his characteristic urgency and bravura. This propelling vigor sometimes seems to have an hysterical edge, due in part to the relentlessly high position of much of his instrumentation. The initial violin figure of the *Toccata*, e.g., is nearly all written above the staff, in a rhythmic *stretto*-effect that is inherently exciting. The *Siciliana* slow movement, however, employs predominantly the upper registers of the various instruments for a wholly different purpose: an almost ethereal luminosity quite unlike anything else that

comes to mind. It begins with a long and shapely *grazioso* duet for solo oboe and viola, unaccompanied, in which the former arches to a high E flat expressly marked "*dolce*". A little later the uncommonly articulate upper ranges of the bassoon and horn are alternated in long-drawn lines, in a manner subtly illuminating and differentiating their expressive qualities.

The *Giga Burlesca* reminds us at first of the continuing Sibelian influence in English wind-writing. Then, with the delayed entry in a saucy trumpet of what I take to be the principal jig tune, the chips are down and the jig is up right to the end. Since this tune is as strikingly similar in its shape and rhythm to one of the sarcastic *Scherzo* themes in Vaughan Williams' Fourth as it is opposite in its treatment, the whole makes a neat antithesis to the latter's diabolism. Walton's orchestral argument is scarcely less brilliant, and that is high praise. At times it also suggests the finale of Strauss' *Aus Italien*, with its liberal use of *Funiculi Funicula*. The stereo recording is very good, though I'd like to hear a little more of that percussion. Westminster had the knack in its *Belshazzar's Feast* of Walton.

On the reverse side we have, most unexpectedly, Gustav Mahler, 1910 vintage. Epic has already issued a very distinguished line of Mahler recordings from Holland, but this is actually the first originating in the U.S. In utter contrast to the "unproblematic" Walton piece, Szell gives us the so-called *Adagio* and *Purgatorio*, the first and third of the five movements which Mahler sketched for his Tenth Symphony and then abandoned, all in the crucial summer before his death. These isolated movements were published in 1951 by Associated Music Publishers,

WALTON: *Partita for Orchestra*; **MAHLER:** *Symphony No. 10*; Cleveland Orchestra conducted by George Szell. Epic Stereo BC-1024, \$5.98.

as edited by an anonymous arranger usually assumed to be Ernst Křenek, since it was he who prepared the first fair copy of their orchestral score in 1924. I have assumed this myself, but Křenek now disclaims any responsibility for the additional orchestration in the published *Adagio*, while admitting that he *must* have orchestrated the *Purgatorio* in order to produce any kind of full score, as all but thirty bars of it exist merely in short score (4-staved *Particell*) in Mahler's manuscript. The mystery of who did prepare the *Adagio* as we know it today is one I am currently investigating, and more than one handwriting is discernible. The album notes by Klaus George Roy say "edited by Otto Jokl", but Jokl, an employee of A.M.P., only checked the already existing additions against the manuscript, retaining them in most cases, and A.M.P. in its turn only inherited the copy scores from Universal of Vienna.

At any rate, with the Mahler centennial fast approaching, and no fewer than three different completions and orchestrations of all five movements of the Tenth coming up, it is high time that orchestras, record companies, and A.M.P. itself stopped referring to these two movements as "Symphony No. 10" as if they constituted the complete work, or still more confusion will ensue. When Westminster recorded the *Adagio* alone under Scherchen (XWN-2220) several years ago, they too labeled their product simply "Symphony No. 10", and it was so listed side by side with the SPA recording under the late F. Charles Adler (30/1), which includes both movements. Both of these recordings were in two-record albums, coupled respectively with the Mahler Fifth (3 sides) and the Bruckner Third (2½ sides). Epic is therefore the first, apart from an early limited edition by Gramophone Newsreel (Franz Schmidt), to make the Tenth available on a single LP, and quite the first to give both movements on one side.

It is distinctly feasible that Mahler would have completed his orchestration of the *Adagio* somewhat differently. The anonymous additions are mainly woodwind doublings of the strings, a rather un-Mahlerian practice evidently applied

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here by a relatively classical-minded musician. Mahler preferred treating the instrumental choirs, and parts thereof, in contrapuntal blocs in the modern manner largely initiated by himself and Bruckner. However, the sounds are still recognizably his, and there is no doubt of the complete harmonic and melodic mastery of his conception in every bar. There has not been a poor recording of this wonderful *Adagio*, and Szell's is in some respects the most tonally gorgeous of all. That Mahler's temptation to destroy the work was a product of superstitious fear and not of artistic judgment is clear to anyone who responds to its strange enchantment. Edward Canby recently termed it "very great music, certainly in a class with the Beethoven Ninth and other such tremendous works as that". Its dissonances and its great melodic leaps so admired by modern composers, he pointed out, just don't sound like leaps and dissonances when we hear them in their context prepared by Mahler—simply melodies and harmonies used expressively and assimilated without special problems. It is pure music-making on an exalted level, and our eventual introduction to the second, fourth and fifth movements will place it

in an even more impressive context, fusing its parts into a cohesive, cyclic whole.

The three available versions of the *Adagio* are quite different in their timing, yet each has captured the gravely flowing quality in its own way. Szell takes 21½ minutes, Adler 23½, and Scherchen 29. Quite an astonishing difference, in all conscience; but it is not a question of tempo alone, for Mitropoulos recently conducted it in 22 minutes on one occasion and in 24 just three days later, yet both of those performances sounded more restless, less relaxed than Szell's. Scherchen is of course the most contemplative, and the many sudden changes in the score, of harmony, of dynamics, etc., benefit by the extra space he gives them to make their points. No one else does it like this, and I suspect that few could so successfully.

The brass is a little more prominent on Westminster, the woodwinds on SPA and Epic. The *echt*-Mahlerian device of *Trillerketten* (chains of trills) in the various woodwinds reaches a veritable apotheosis in the development section of this movement, and their exceptionally clear articulation on SPA makes the entire passage still more vivid. The eloquent harp part is more resonant on Westminster, and also the string bass. The slight bass attenuation on Epic stereo may be somewhat modified in the monophonic pressing (LC-3568), which I do not have for comparison. Otherwise the stereo sound is splendid, and I think the total effect may outweigh the other advantages on Westminster. Very highly recommended. The spatial effect where the long opening viola unison is suddenly replaced by the full string polyphony is overwhelmingly beautiful, and this alternation of unison and polyphony is repeated throughout in many guises, as in a polyphonic Mass whose sections are introduced by plainchant.

The *Purgatorio*, a shadowy, brief (four-minute) *Allegretto moderato*, is less amenable than the *Adagio* to the isolation to which they are both subjected. The movement derives its name from the fact that the composer wrote the words "Purgatorio or Inferno" on its title page, then scratched out "Inferno". It does not adjoin the *Adagio* in Mahler's scheme,

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The Index of Record Reviews

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and is really a kind of introduction to the more daemonic second half of the symphony, especially to the spectre-haunted fourth movement and the middle (*Allegro*) part of the finale, where its principal figures are further treated and developed. For all its brevity it is highly effective in itself, with a subtle, concentrated power. If Beethoven's *Allegretto scherzando* ticks like a metronome and Haydn's *Andante* like a clock, this might be taken for the ticking of a time bomb. Actually the underlying rhythm derives from Mahler's song *Life on Earth*, where it depicts the sinister idea dubbed the "Mill of Life", grinding on relentlessly to the end. Yet surely this *Purgatorio* makes a rather unbalanced and cryptic little pendant to the nearly half-hour *Adagio*. The pairing is in no wise analogous to the two extant movements of Schubert's "Unfinished".

From the two available recordings of the movement, both excellent, the crispness of Cleveland's strings, even though the entire main section is played with mutes, is especially admirable, and the Epic sound is generally superior. Szell makes the sudden warning at its close more effectively menacing than Adler. But a warning of what? The fact that this *ends* the "symphony", as it is now presented, makes the device totally meaningless within the context which Mahler provided. In effect Adler reverses the two movements, since the *Purgatorio* (which SPA calls "*Intermezzo*", by the way) follows the finale of Bruckner's Third on side 3, and the *Adagio* occupies side 4. Take your choice; Mahler's functional meaning is missing in either case, and will not be restored until the remaining movements are supplied in adequate realizations by sympathetic hands. —J.D.

•
MAYER: *Hello, World!; The Greatest Sound Around*; Eleanor Roosevelt (narrator); John Langstaff (baritone); Little Orchestra Society conducted by Thomas Scherman. RCA Victor LM-2332, \$4.98.

▲THE engaging *Hello, World!* was commissioned by Thomas Scherman and first performed under his direction by the Little Orchestra Society at a concert for

young people on November 10, 1956. William Mayer and Susan Otto wrote the music and the words, respectively, of both this and its companion piece on the record. The basic theme of this inspirational melodrama is the idea that there is a word for "Hello" in every language. Mrs. Roosevelt takes us from country to country, in each case giving us this key word; then John Langstaff sings his theme song with its climax on that word. The listener is invited to join in. The tune is catchy, and provides an easy way to learn something potentially useful. *The Greatest Sound Around* deals with animals and the sounds they make. Its sense is carried forward by the speaking of Mr. Langstaff. Throughout both pieces Mr. Scherman provides a glowing background. —P.L.M.

•
MESSAGER: "*Les petites Michu*"; Liliane Berton (Blanche-Marie); Nadine Renaux (Marie-Blanche); Camille Maurane (Gaston); Gisèle Desmoutiers (Madame Michu); Claude Devos (Aristide); Duvalaix (Michu); Lucien Lovano (Le Général); Chœurs R. Saint-Paul and orchestra conducted by Jules Gressier. Pathé DTX-157, \$5.95 (Import)

▲DATING from 1897, "*Les petites Michu*" has had an honorable and successful career down the years. The score, or so much of it as is given here, is a succession of distinctive and attractive numbers. The two heroines set things off with a duet playing around their names, Blanche-Marie and Marie-Blanche; here as elsewhere Messenger gives zest to his melodies with intriguing rhythmic patterns. From this we range to a little prayer mostly in thirds, not too far removed from Humperdinck, and a patter song for the General which casts a wry glance over the channel to Gilbert and Sullivan. The cast is made up of artists by now familiar in this Pathé series of light operas. The two sopranos, Berton and Renaux, are very charming indeed, and Maurane proves again that he is a fine artist. Gressier keeps the whole thing going in the greatest of good humor. —P.L.M.

MOZART: *Piano Concerto No. 17 in G, K. 453; Piano Concerto No. 24 in C minor, K. 491*; Gina Bachauer (piano); the London Orchestra conducted by Alec Sherman. Capitol Stereo SG-7194, \$5.98.

⑧ **SOLID**, well-paced, and well-recorded performances of works requiring considerably more imagination than is displayed by this soloist or conductor. Bachauer and Sherman seem content to allow things to proceed as smoothly as possible within a rather restricted dynamic framework. But from first to last there is a lack of that involvement in the music which makes great compositions, as both of these unquestionably are, translatable from notes on paper to emotional experiences. If your ears can stand the horrendous acoustics of Edwin Fischer's versions of both concerti in the withdrawn Victor LCT-6013 set, then the difference between merely getting through the works and interpreting them will be clearly illustrated. —H.G.

MOZART: *Quintet in E flat, K. 452*; Walter Panhoffer (piano), Manfred Kautsky (oboe), Alfred Boskovsky (clarinet), Josef Veleba (horn), Ernst Pamperl (bassoon); *Trio in E flat, K. 498 ("Kegelstatt")*; Panhoffer (piano), A. Boskovsky (clarinet), Willi Boskovsky (viola). London Stereo CS-6109, \$4.98.

(Quintet)

Serkin, Phila. Winds.....Columbia ML-4834

⑧ **THE** Viennese players present these works in a style of completely relaxed mastery. For me, no better version of either work exists on records. Prior to the monophonic version of this disc (LL-1609) released last year, I had heard only one outstanding performance of the Trio, and that a live one by Paul Ulanowsky, Stanley Drucker, and Paul Doktor. Now a satisfactory recording in fine stereo sound is at last available. Boskovsky is certainly one of the world's finest clarinetists and Panhoffer is a superior ensemble player. Willi Boskovsky treats his viola somewhat brutally in solos. He is a violinist playing the viola, but the result sounds more like the product of lifting a cello to the chin. Still, the sense of

unity is preserved and any further carping would be the rankest ingratitude. The Quintet has fared somewhat better on LP, but still not with the ensemble polish here displayed. Serkin's marvelous playing is far too penetrating to blend with the fussy primness of the Philadelphia winds; the Gieseeking-Philharmonia version suffers from the same problem in reverse; the Capitol reading is almost grimly serious about such graceful, lovely music. The London version strikes exactly the right balance between airiness and the peculiarly Mozartian sadness which pervades the heavenly melodies of this work (and the Trio as well). —H.G.

MUSSORGSKY: *Pictures at an Exhibition*; Vladimir Horowitz (piano). RCA Victor LM-2357, \$4.98.

Horowitz.....RCA Victor LVT-1023

▲ **IN** a word, this performance is tremendous. Those who are familiar with the older recording (originally dating from 1948) will be surprised to discover that the present performance, which was recorded at a Carnegie Hall appearance on April 23, 1951, is quite different in concept. The older version was equally tremendous in power and scope, but the reasonably good piano sound on the 78 r.p.m. discs was not dubbed with too great success onto LP. The new recording has an amazingly wide dynamic range, but regrettably there is an overabundance of distortion in all the louder passages which results in a sound that can only be described as a clanging cacophony. Dropping the treble will help somewhat, but the dryness and thin bass of Horowitz' piano still persists. Sound deficiencies, however, are only a minor annoyance if one is willing to overlook the reproduction in favor of the performance itself. The primary difference between the two Horowitz versions is probably the fact that the present record is an actual concert interpretation; in addition to the added stimulation of an audience with a resulting heightening of projection, there seems to be a more tragically vital concept. The *Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks* is almost sarcastic in its scampering;

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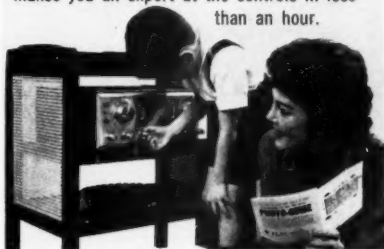
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Goldenberg and Schmuyle transcends its satire and becomes profoundly pathetic; and the *Great Gate of Kiev* opens to reveal not only the grandeur but also all the struggles and tribulations of the Russian people. This is an epic interpretation, unique in its power and penetration, with playing that is absolutely electrifying. Most highly recommended. —I.K.

•
OFFENBACH: *Gaîté Parisienne* (arr. Rosenthal); **J. STRAUSS:** *Le Beau Danube* (arr. Désormière); Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Paul Strauss. Decca/Deutsche Grammophon Gesellschaft Stereo DGS-712-013, \$5.98.

⑧ **BOTH** *Gaîté* (as previously reviewed in July, 1959) and *Le Beau Danube* glow with warmth and lilt. This mellowness of spirit is more suited to the Strauss, perhaps, but it is quite effective, nevertheless, in the Offenbach. The engineering of this Decca-released disc is fully equal to that of the DGG import of *Gaîté*, although the quality of the surfaces is not competitive. —P.C.P.

•
PUCCINI: "*La Fanciulla del West*"; Birgit Nilsson (Minnie); Andrea Mongelli (Jack Rance); João Gibin (Dick Johnson); Renato Ercolani (Nick); Antonio Cassinelli (Ashby); Renzo Sordello (Sonora); Florindo Andreolli (Trin); Giuseppe Costariol (Sid); Dino Mantovani (Bello); Dino Formichini (Harry); Antonio Costantino (Joe); Leonardo Monreale (Happy); Giuseppe Morresi (Larkens); Carlo Forti (Billy Jackrabbit and José Castro); Niccolò Zaccaria (Jake Wallace); Angelo Mercurial (Un Postiglione); La Scala Chorus and Orchestra, conducted by Lovro von Matatic. Angel Stereo set S-5393, six sides, \$17.94.

Tebaldi, Del Monaco, McNeil. London 1306
Gavazzi, Campagnano, Savarese. Cetra 1215

⑧ **WHEN** the recent London "*Girl of the Golden West*" starring Tebaldi and Del Monaco, was released, I found myself in the minority, really preferring the performance recorded some years ago by Cetra. Most critics praised the set for its sonic qualities, the wonderfully convinc-

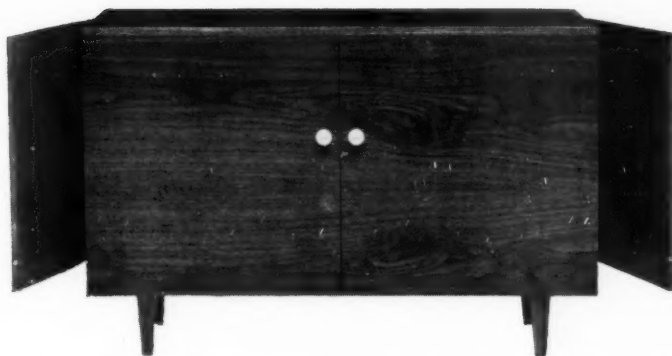
ing stage effects made possible by stereo, and the singing of the popular principals. I could go along with a good deal of this: Tebaldi is certainly in superb voice (though she is too much the perfect lady); McNeil and Tozzi would be hard to improve upon. But Del Monaco does not find the going easy; he gives no illusion at all. The opera itself I find increasingly hard to take. If this story is to be made into an opera at all, I would prefer something like Douglas Moore's "*Ballad of Baby Doe*," something with genuine local color. But it would be hard to take this story very seriously today no matter how it might be treated. With all the *Hello's*, the sad song about *Il vecchio cane*, and my favorite line, *Una buona giornata per Wells Fargo*, it is a little too much.

Yet this new recording does its best to redeem the work. The conductor, a Yugoslavian, leaves nothing to be desired either in tense drama or musical detail, and the cast is uniformly good—as convincing as an Italian opera group can be in this setting. Birgit Nilsson is much more at home than Tebaldi, and her voice is very telling, especially in the higher flights. The brilliance and solidity of these tones, indeed, suggest Emmy Destinn, the first Minnie. Her tenor partner, a young Brazilian named Gibin, has a good ample voice if rather earthy in quality. I do not find indications of especially strong imagination, but he has as much as the character calls for. Mongelli's Jack Rance is a real villain, amusingly reminiscent of Scarpia. The stage realism in this recording is as striking as I remember that in the London set to be, with especially convincing moments in the crowd scenes. One slight annoyance in the set reviewed was caused by some excessive surface noises. —P.L.M.

•
PUCCINI: "*Tosca*"—*Selections*; Ninon Vallin (Tosca); M. di Mazzei (Cavaradosi); Endrèze (Scarpia); M. Payen (Spoletta); Le Sacristan; with orchestra conducted by Gustave Cloez. Odéon XOC-124, \$5.95 (Import).

▲ **THIS** set dates back to the thirties; it was once available at 78 r.p.m. in an American Decca pressing. It is hard to

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believe there is still a vast public for it in this country, as this very Italian opera does not translate particularly well, and I am afraid the cast is hardly ideal. Vallin was a great artist with a lovely and appealing voice, but she was hardly the stately prima donna type one associates with Tosca. She sings well in these recordings, but there are few thrills in her performance. Endrèze, an American, makes a gruff if very French Scarpia, but an interesting one at the least. But di Mazzei's strange thin voice seems quite out of its element here. The performance is of course much abridged. —P.L.M.

●
RACHMANINOFF: *Concerto No. 2 in C minor, Op. 18*; Felicja Blumenthal (piano); Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Michael Gielen. Vox Stereo STPL-511.500, \$5.95.

⑤ALTHOUGH the sound and the orchestral accompaniment here belong with the cream of competitive stereo versions, the "straight" pianistic approach to Rachmaninoff has never been successful. His Slavic romancing must be milked by a special kind of tension-producing rubato within each measure and in this way each new climax is built from the crest of the last, as in Rachmaninoff's own recording and, more recently, in Istomin's. Miss Blumenthal's controlled and refined tastes are therefore inappropriate to this music—her musicality and her sensitivity are not enough. Besides, her tempi are erratic, and she is unable at times to keep up with even so slow a pace as she has chosen. —J.B.L.

●
The Orchestral Ravel: *La Valse*; *Valses nobles et sentimentales*; *Ma Mère l'Oye* (complete ballet); *Bolero*; *Le tombeau de Couperin*; *Rapsodie espagnole*; *Alborada del gracioso*; *Menuet antique*; *Pavane pour une infante défunte*; *Daphnis and Chloé* (complete ballet); Orchestre du Théâtre National de l'Opéra de Paris conducted by Manuel Rosenthal. Westminster set XWN-3309, six sides, \$14.94.

▲IT is a paradoxical fact that it is easier to conduct a symphony than a work that communicates through other than full-

scale thematic development. Ravel's music, in its montage of orchestral weights, perspective, outline, smudging, highlighting and the like is a tempting matter for conductors. Many of them exaggerate these points, reminding one of the violist who bought a very expensive instrument and boasted to the conductor that his viola was so sensitive and big in tone that it sounded like a cello. The conductor's retort was that a viola which would merely sound like a viola would be preferred. Rosenthal's treatment of Ravel makes Ravel sound like Ravel. Like Markevitch, Rosenthal's ability as a composer (and in his case particular knowledge of orchestration) gives him extra weapons in regard to conducting. When Ravel smudges his sounds he does not simply create an effect. He creates a new color; the pigments are mixed. The conductor who fails to realize this merely thickens the instrumental strands at the expense of the total fabric. Further, each Ravel work has its own *orchestral* style, as different as the programmatic content that separates *Le Tombeau* from *Bolero*. Rosenthal does not lose his way.

The six sides of this anthology include all of the original pieces, plus Ravel's orchestral versions of the several piano pieces that resulted in two distinct works in each case. It would be fascinating to hear the early, unpublished "*Shéhérazade*" Overture. It would also be interesting to have a release that would cover all the Ravel transcriptions of other composers' music as well—the two Debussy pieces (*Sarabande* and *Dance*) the Chabrier *Menuet pompeux*, and of course the extraordinary Mussorgsky *Pictures*. There is also *L'Éventail de Jeannette*, a fanfare. And, finally, the unpublished orchestrations of pieces by Chopin, Schumann, and Satie.

But there are still grounds for rejoicing in this release. The *Daphnis* is played with superb finish; *Bolero* (Ravel disguised in Rossini's crescendo clothes) never wavers a metronomic fraction and the recoloring of the snapshot-like theme has never been done better. Although *Tombeau* is not so fluid as one hears it under other conductors, the tempered touches of Rosenthal and his musicians do not make the

music dull; they merely give it a middle-age sag that is unbecoming. The best example of Rosenthal's understanding of Ravel is the *Rapsodie espagnole*. Here the slithering sensuousness is played down and, accordingly, is much more sensuous by being on its cultivated behavior. The complete *Mère l'Oye* is even more beautiful than the familiar suite. —A.C.

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV: *Scheherazade*; New York Philharmonic conducted by Leonard Bernstein. Columbia ML-5387, \$4.98.

Beecham, Royal Phil. Angel 35505
Monteux, London Sym. RCA Victor LM-2208

▲IN this heyday of hi-fi, the kind of

monitoring accorded every climax and fortissimo passage here is absurd, especially with a work so strongly dramatic and broad in dynamic scope as *Scheherazade*, so that every crescendo and attacca is blunted by a drop in the recording level. Bernstein's interpretation is discreet, and for the first three movements lacking in the drive and color to be found in the recent Beecham and Monteux accounts. Concertmaster John Corigliano delivers the violin solos with considerable finesse, but there are ragged entrances and imprecisions in tonality by the strings. Columbia's miking is distant, the range of sound wide and full. —A.K.



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January, 1960

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SCHUBERT: *Mass in E flat*; G. Rath-auscher (soprano); E. Hofstaetter (contralto); A. Planyavsky (tenor); K. Equiluz (tenor); W. Berry (basso); Akademie Kammerchor and Vienna Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Rudolf Moralt. Lyricord LL-76, \$4.98.

▲THIS is a reissue of the recording put out nearly a decade ago under the Vox label. We must be grateful, for there has been no other performance of the work available. Composed within a half-year of Schubert's death, the E flat Mass is powerful and deeply moving. Nowhere in all his music is his sincerity more patent, nor does the font of his melodic inspiration flow more freely. It is a little sad to remember as we hear the frequent fugal movements of this Mass that at the time of its writing he was ready to undertake a new study of the techniques of counterpoint, in which he felt himself woefully lacking! The performance is spirited and outspoken. There are inequalities in the singing, due, no doubt, to hasty preparation, but in the end one is convinced that this is among the loveliest and strongest of all Masses. The disc is worth your attention. —P.L.M.

●
J. STRAUSS: *"A Night in Venice"*; Enzo Stuarti (Pappacoda); Thomas Tibbett Hayward (Mario); Norwood Smith (Caramello); Guen Omeron (Barbara); Jack Russell (The Duke of Palobino); Nola Fairbanks (Ciboletta); Laurel Hurley (Nina); David Kurlan (Senator Bartoldi); Kenneth Schon (Senator Del Aqua); chorus and orchestra, conducted by Thomas Martin. Everest LPBR-6028 or Stereo SDBR-3028, \$4.40.

⑤WHEN the late Michael Todd produced a show, though the score might be upwards of a half-century old, the occasion became a world première. It is not illogical, therefore, that the sponsors of this recording should advertise "the original cast", for these are the singers who enjoyed the applause at Jones Beach. The text, to be sure, had been translated and/or adapted for the occasion by Ruth and Thomas Martin, and in

this the operetta was new. In any case it would be idle to draw comparisons with previous recordings, all of which, so far as I know, are sung in German. Three members of this cast are or have been members of the Metropolitan Opera, and in general the voices are fresh and agreeable. The sound is superb. —P.L.M.

●
R. STRAUSS: *Don Quixote; Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche*; Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Kempe. Capitol-EMI Stereo SG-7190, \$5.98.

⑤FOR ease of movement, for revelation of detail, for purity of sonority, this performance of Strauss' greatest orchestral composition ranks with the most impressive I have ever heard. Kempe has made this bristlingly complex score emerge with a clarity and lightness that make it sound like chamber music. The effect is bewitching. Tortelier, who plays the important cello part, is in the mood of this extraordinary rendition. His tone does not have big, international glamor, but his sensitivity to the musical and expressive requirements of this music is something quite special. This performance runs to a side and a half. Unfortunately, the beautiful recording is marred on side one by rumble and patches of noisy surfaces. Side two, which contains a lively reading of *Till Eulenspiegel*, is more acceptable. —C.J.L.

●
TCHAIKOVSKY: *Capriccio Italien, Op. 45*; **RIMSKY-KORSAKOV:** *Capriccio Espagnol, Op. 34*; RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra conducted by Kiril Kondrashin. RCA Victor LM-2323, \$3.98, or Stereo LSC-2323, \$5.98.

⑤IF ANY conductor alive has this music more in his blood, I have yet to hear him. These are really stunning performances, full of color, spirit, and excitement. For all his concentration of energy, Kondrashin does not neglect the little nuances that make these pieces so richly expressive. The orchestra is highly competent, but now and then one feels that Kondrashin does not have quite the musicians to give his ideas their full due. That he was able

to communicate so many of his interpretative insights in what must have been a very short acquaintance is, however, amazing. Brilliant recording. —D.H.M.

VILLA-LOBOS: *Forest of the Amazon*; Bidú Sayão (soprano) with chorus; Symphony of the Air, conducted by Heitor Villa-Lobos. United Artists UAL-7007, \$4.98, or Stereo UAS-8007, \$5.98.

⑤WE are told that *The Forest of the Amazon* is "Villa-Lobos' latest creation". As this review is written word has just come of the composer's passing, which leaves open the question whether this music was actually his swan song. The work consists of a series of tone pictures written for the M-G-M motion picture based on William Henry Hudson's *Green Mansions*. It seems that Villa-Lobos disliked writing this kind of background music, and only with much persuasion, aided and abetted by his wife, were the producers able to induce him to undertake the task. "It should be pointed out", the commentator warns, "that the

musical sections of this record do not follow the order of the book. . . He uses the story only as a basis of reference. At most there is a suggestion of the mood and atmosphere of the story." There are twelve musical sections on the two sides of the disc, some using chorus and orchestra, some the voice of Bidú Sayão, some the orchestra alone. The composer paints his pictures with bold strokes and in striking colors. His orchestra is big and lush, befitting the vegetation of the Amazon. The section labeled "Forest Fire" gives his imagination perhaps its widest play. His use of the solo soprano voice is especially effective because it has been so atmospherically recorded. Sayão's tone, distinctive as ever, is the more haunting for being a little distant. She is a part of the ensemble, not its entire foreground. Her songs, to texts by Dora Vasconcellos, are pleasingly lyrical, not unrelated to the *Bachianas Brasileiras* Sayão made so famous. One of them, *Blue Dusk*, with a solo guitar woven into its background, might well become another hit. The engineer, Robert E. Blake, has served the composer well. —P.L.M.

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From RCA, the first American recording of Verdi's 'Macbeth'

By C. J. LUTEN

NO EXPENSE has been spared to bring us this first American recording of Verdi's "Macbeth". It documents the Metropolitan production (also that company's first) and was made in Manhattan Center shortly after the initial public performance on February 5, 1959. Because it represents the first opportunity for many to acquaint themselves with a fascinating score by the young Verdi, because opera recordings made in America with big names are costly, and because "Macbeth" cannot be expected to sell nearly so well as a more familiar opera, give credit to RCA Victor for a rare display of daring enterprise.

"Macbeth" dates from 1847 and was Verdi's tenth opera; "I Masnadieri", "Il Corsaro", "Il Battaglia di Legnano", and "Luisa Miller" were still to come before Verdi stunned the world with "Rigoletto" in 1851. It is my opinion that it is second to "Nabucco" above all his other early compositions, perhaps because it was his first opera based on his adored Shakespeare. Whatever the reason, it remained in his thoughts long after its creation; and finally, in 1865, Verdi revised it for its introduction to Paris. With the inclusion

of Macbeth's final aria, which Verdi did not retain from the original version, and with the omission of the Act III ballet music which was added to satisfy the Parisian audience, the improved 1865 version is what has been recorded.

The virtues of this version, incidentally, are extolled with perception and in detail by Henry W. Simon in the notes which accompany these records. Simon adds to this fine job a comparison of the Piave-Maffei text for "Macbeth" with the Shakespeare play line by line, as well as a Verdian synopsis with the Shakespearean scene by scene in a column adjacent to the English libretto translation by Glen Sauls and the Italian text itself.

All of this material will help the listener discover for himself just how well Verdi condensed and recast the Shakespearean play for operatic purposes, and how he managed to retain the spirit of the play while giving to only two of its characters—Macbeth and Lady Macbeth—a three-dimensional treatment. Moreover, in studying the libretto, the alert listener will discover reasons why this performance, for all its musical competence and luxury of sound, does not add up to more than a sporadically effective musico-dramatic experience.

Make no mistake, "Macbeth" was intended by Verdi to be real music drama. Much has been made of the broad artistic jump made by Wagner from "Tannhäuser" to the Ortrud-Telramund dialogue in the second act of "Lohengrin", wherein Wagner gives Ortrud the single word "Gott" as a reply to Telramund's fear that his crime will be mystically punished. This realistic invention took place in Wagner's mind in 1847 while writing Act II of "Lohengrin", precisely

VERDI: "Macbeth"; Leonard Warren, baritone (Macbeth); Leonie Rysanek, soprano (Lady Macbeth); Jerome Hines, bass (Banquo); Carlo Bergonzi, tenor (Macduff); and William Olvis, Carlotta Ordassy, Gerhard Pechner, Osie Hawkins, Calvin Marsh, Emilia Cundari, Mildred Allen, Harold Sternberg; Metropolitan Opera Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. RCA Victor set LM-6147, six sides, \$14.94, or Stereo LSC-6147, \$17.98.

the year Verdi was applying similar realistic invention in the short, conversational lines with which Lady Macbeth's role abounds.

Indeed, the focal point of "*Macbeth*" is not the title role, however important it may be, but rather the part of Lady Macbeth. At one time Verdi seriously considered naming his opera "*Lady Macbeth*"; such was his regard for the character. That she is the mainspring for a genuine music drama is clearly revealed in Verdi's own words regarding the performing style of Lady Macbeth. "...I should like Lady Macbeth to look ugly and evil...I should like in Lady Macbeth a voice rough, harsh, and gloomy...something diabolical about it."

Simon, in his notes, points out Leonie Rysanek's observations on Verdi's comment. Rysanek, the Lady Macbeth of this recording, has guessed that Verdi was attempting to keep from using a fine soprano of his day, Eugenia Tadolini, in the Neapolitan production of 1848; and was finding a tactful way of saying he considered her an angelic vocalist but not actress. Surely this is a possibility. But Verdi seldom said anything he did not mean, and my guess is that he knew what he wanted and had ruled out Tadolini not only for her inability to act with her body but also her probable inability to act this part with her voice.

One has only to follow the libretto line by line with the music to conclude that the pale warmth of Rysanek's voice and her human portrayal (which seems always to ask for sympathy) are unsuited to this vital role. In much of her singing, but particularly in those short, vigorous replies to Macbeth, where is the biting scorn, the poisonous intensity in her tone? It just is not there. Though Rysanek is in excellent voice for this recording and though her voice has never before sounded so well on records, the soprano gives us no more than musical and auditory pleasure. It is significant, I think, that she is at her best in the drinking song during the banquet scene (where little characterization is necessary) and in the sleepwalking scene (where one has his first opportunity to pity Lady Macbeth).

Leonard Warren as Macbeth starts out as if his singing will be rough, but by the end of the first scene he is working with his accustomed skill. He begins to catch the right dramatic tone for Macbeth in his duet with his lady in the next scene and really convinces one he is the tormented murderer in the banquet scene and in his final encounter with the witches. In his final aria, however, Warren fails to project the broken and disillusioned Macbeth; he is no more than a smooth, rich-voiced baritone with the poor taste to take the license of a top note delivered with splendid volume and resonance where none is called for by any conceivable expressive justification.

The remainder of the cast is musical and easy on the ears. Jerome Hines is a pleasure, and Carlo Bergonzi delivers his aria with fine style. The work of the chorus and orchestra is certainly well above the average big city opera house routine, if not up to gala evening standards at Milan and Vienna.

There is regrettably little dramatic intensity in much of Erich Leinsdorf's conducting, even if it cannot be faulted in matters of musical manners and in the direction of musical traffic. Ultimately, it is Leinsdorf and Rysanek who must primarily share the burden for not lifting this performance above the level of a satisfying musical experience into the realm of a memorable musico-theatrical thrill.

A final word about this stereo recording. Those familiar with the luxurious resonance of Manhattan Center will have an idea of the over-all sound, but one must hear these records to appreciate the fine directional sense that has been obtained. The soloists are sometimes a bit too close to the mikes (particularly Warren), the brasses should in some passages have more impact, and a couple of the tuttis are a bit woolly. One may even object to the placement of so many of the violins on the right side; that is a bit hard to get used to. But, all in all, here is an excellent recording, characterized by distinctness of timbre in the orchestra; good sensible movement of the principals; and plentiful sound in the full ensembles.

For Vivaldians, the prospect is very promising

WITH THIS, its first release, the Library of Recorded Masterpieces has begun to issue the complete works of Antonio Vivaldi.

The plan is to bring out one record each month containing at least four works to be chosen for their variety in instrumentation. Ricordi scores of all pieces on the record will be supplied with each album, and this in itself represents a sizable saving, for if purchased separately they would total an average of fifteen dollars. Although the individual cost per record hardly can be considered inexpensive, the subscriber will have several advantages. In addition to the inclusion of scores, his package will not have been played by anyone else; he may replace any worn or damaged copy in the series for a service charge of three dollars; and he may change his monophonic copy for the stereo version at the same cost. (There is no difference in price between stereo and monophonic records.) Sometime early next summer a recorded "in-

dex" to all the works on the prospectus will be issued together with a cross-indexed catalogue of Vivaldi's music, and these, too, will be offered to subscribers. So much for the details of the project.

On the basis of this first recording, the prospect is very promising indeed. There has been a great deal of Vivaldi recorded already, including several of the pieces on the present disc, but very little of it has been done systematically. The LRM recordings apparently will be made after public performances in New York, so that the interpretations should be more solidified than many of those that are the result of pick-up studio sessions. Max Goberman has assembled a group of very capable musicians, and his selection of repertoire for this initial release is nicely varied. The performances are spirited, with good balance between instruments.

Stylistically, the playing is extremely good, even though one could wish for a little more ornamentation, especially in the slow movements. However, this stylistic practice is overlooked by all but a very small minority of performers, and in all fairness it should be stated that these performances are at least as good as those by most of the current baroque chamber groups. Goberman has, in fact, achieved a far leaner and more nearly correct sound for his strings than one commonly hears.

The recorded sound is very good, albeit a little unresonant; interestingly enough, it is quite similar (as I remember it) to the acoustics in the set of Boyce Symphonies which Goberman recorded on 78 r.p.m. many years ago. And the scholarship in the album notes, including the complete list of reference numbers for Vivaldi works, is a model of how such things should be accomplished.

This is a project well worth serious attention. Collectors should welcome the opportunity both to hear and to own the scores of so many previously unrecorded Vivaldi works (as well as the familiar ones), especially when they are performed so capably.

—I.K.

VIVALDI: *Concerto in F for two oboes, bassoon, two horns, violin, strings, and harpsichord* (Tomo 43; Fanna XII, No. 10; Pincherle 273); *Concerto in A for strings and harpsichord* (Tomo 5; Fanna XI, No. 1; Pincherle 231); *Concerto in G minor for flute, bassoon, strings, and harpsichord (La Notte)* (Tomo 33; Fanna XII, No. 5; Pincherle 342); *Concerto in E flat for bassoon, strings, and harpsichord* (Tomo 273; Fanna VIII, No. 27; Pincherle 433); Albert Goltzer, Harry Snyles (oboes); Frank Schwartz (bassoon in 1 & 4); Elias Carmen (bassoon in 3); Joseph Singer, Arthur Berv (horns); Leonid Bolotine (violin); Julius Baker (flute); Robert Conant (harpsichord continuo); New York Sinfonietta conducted by Max Goberman. Library of Recorded Masterpieces—Vol. 1, No. 1; \$8.50 (Mono or Stereo; available by subscription only from the Library of Recorded Masterpieces, 150 West 82nd Street, New York 24, N. Y.).

Half stories, half dreams

A Guest Review

By RAY ELLSWORTH

I HAVE been sitting here for about an hour trying to spread a net of words to catch and communicate the image and essence of Anaïs Nin.

Now that you know I have failed, let me be the heavy-footed, lump-headed fellow I feel I am just now and ask some simple but unanswerable questions: Who is she? What is she? And in supplying answers to the unanswerable, end by telling you nothing.

Anaïs Nin is the daughter of a Spanish musician (Joaquin Nin, pianist-composer) who has spent much of her life in France (on a houseboat on the Seine, naturally), but who writes in English and now lives in New York (in Greenwich Village, naturally). She is a tiny, exquisite creature, like something on loan from a doll factory, half gypsy girl in captivity at first glimpse, then suddenly, and rather dangerously, a woman full grown—a Spanish mystery and a French gem that sparkles and cuts.

Miss Nin is also a novelist and short story writer. In her novels and short stories are all the qualities attributed to her above. Edmund Wilson said about them: "...half stories, half dreams... they mix a sometimes exquisite poetry with a homely realistic observation." That strikes me as pretty limp coming from the celebrated Mr. Wilson, but then

Anaïs Nin reading "House of Incest"
(Complete). Contemporary Classics Recordings. \$4.85.

Anaïs Nin reading from "Under A Glass Bell" (Four Short Stories: *Under A Glass Bell*; *Ragtime*; *Hejda*; *The Child Born Out of The Fog*). Contemporary Classics Recordings. \$4.85.



Miss Nin and friend (Photo by Seichi Sunami)

we all limp a little beside Anaïs Nin.

House of Incest, which she reads in its entirety on the recording, is listed as a novel but it is all poetry. No story. A character, without face or form, but with a name: Sabina, who merges into Jeanne, who is one but two, and the two of them asking in desperation: "Does anyone know who I am?" The first-person narrator of this photomontage of shimmering sensibilities changes into the third person and addresses herself. "To nourish illusion. To destroy reality," Jeanne tells Sabina, "I will help you: it is I who will invent lies for you and with them we will traverse the world." This was the first book Miss Nin wrote "out of dreams I registered for a year, the kernel of the novels later and the basic direction of the work: proceed from the dream outward."

This Miss Nin has done, more or less. She has proceeded from the dream outward. Sabina and Jeanne return in various roles in later stories and books, metamorphosing slowly in search of themselves. Not all of the stories are all dream, but they are dream-like, fragile and exotic and real—and unforgettable. They never get too far off the ground to fail to bring the reader (in this case the listener) up short with the phrase that is incisive and powerful in its insight.

Under A Glass Bell, one of the four short stories Miss Nin reads on the second record, is like that. A story like a Persian print with a live electric wire at the end. So is *Ragtime*, which is not about the music, but about a ragpicker who could tolerate nothing that was complete, but

who loved "the broken, the worn, the fragmented." *Hejda* is almost pure narrative, another Persian print but with more than a touch of naturalism. It begins: "The unveiling of women is a delicate matter. It will not happen overnight. We are all afraid of what we shall find." And it tells of Hejda, the Oriental girl who unveils to come to Paris to be a painter, who falls in love there with a timid young Rumanian who had "decadent, aristocratic hands", and what we find when Hejda's veils are finally off. *The Child Born Out of the Fog* is very short, but a good example of the essence of Anaïs Nin's special art, the dream encountering reality.

The covers of these recordings are surrealistic photomontages by Val Telberg (each individual recording comes in a jacket with a different photomontage by Telberg, incidentally, not just each series) to suggest the dream quality in Miss Nin's work. But they also suggest that she deals in surrealism, which is misleading. There is nothing of the cold introspection I associate with that particular "ism" here—nor is Miss Nin's work at all like the products of the new French school of photomontage novel, or "anti-novel" as the reviewers have taken to

calling it, which deals in a fleeting surface reflection of passing reality.

Miss Nin has no "ism" but her own attempt to convey the inner sensitivities of the individual, all of them—sight, smell, sound, all the nerve ends—reacting to the whip-flicks of outer reality. Furthermore, Miss Nin is an exquisite poetic stylist; in her hands words dance, shimmer, cast many reflections, and even have shadows. Beside her the others seem to write with blunt instruments.

On the records, Miss Nin speaks with a warm, firm, clear voice. She does not dramatize, but simply reads, letting the words carry the tale. There are no sound effects. She has difficulty in pronouncing "r's" which contributes a piquant touch of continental charm. I have found it best to turn the lights low, and lie back with eyes closed, and let Miss Nin's voice come to me, weaving its spell, alerting me with the arresting phrase, rather than trying to get the "sense" of every word the first time out.

This is a limited edition, each recording being issued in 100 copies only, with the jackets hand-numbered. They are available only at The Phoenix Book Shop, 18 Cornelia Street, New York 14, N. Y., by mail or over the counter.

Alice in Stereoland

CARROLL: *Alice in Wonderland*; Adapted and Produced by Douglas Cleverdon; Margaretta Scott (Narrator), Jane Asher (Alice), Vivienne Chatterton (Dormouse, Baby), Tony Church (King of Hearts), Frank Duncan (Mouse, March Hare, Frog Footman), Leslie French (White Rabbit, Fish Footman), Deryck Guyler (Cheshire Cat, Lizard), Carleton Hobbs (Lory, Mad Hatter), Margaret Rawlins (Queen of Hearts), Norman Shelly (Gryphon, Caterpillar), Ian Wallace (Mock Turtle), Marjorie Westbury (Duchess, Helen). London Stereo set OSA-1206, four sides, \$11.96.

⑧ I DOUBT whether any more effective way of alternately telling and enacting a story could be found than this utter

immersion in stereo sound—especially a children's fantasy like *Alice in Wonderland*. The story-teller (Margaretta Scott) stands off to one side, and as soon as a scene is set and the dialogue and action begins, your entire room, and seemingly far beyond, is transformed into a dream world encompassing a lake of tears, a pot-hurling cook in a duchess' kitchen, a lobster quadrille, and all the rest of it. The fantastic becomes more real than sober reality, so evocative are the sounds we hear, precisely placed in an invisible space, and accompanying an invisible action which we can conjure up all the more vividly because it is not awkwardly presented to our eyes. Alice falls into her own tears with a mighty splash, pots and screaming babies alike sail through the air

(very stereophonically), and baby turns into a pig with equally realistic vocal effects. Apparently nothing is impossible; and this, as Edward Canby pointed out, is one of the meanings of our world today that makes us feel closer to Lewis Carroll's *Alice*: "Fantasies of every sort are turning into hard, realistic fact, on earth and in space."

The adult cast is composed of excellent and quite professional British actors. The Alice (Jane Asher) is only twelve, however, and this makes for further literalness, as compared with the more sophisticated projection of actress Joan Greenwood, in another dramatized reading on Caedmon 1097. There, as in Cyril Ritchard's complete one-man reading of the story with music and songs (Riverside SPD-22, eight sides), there is more of a conscious make-believe quality, stylized

in one case and strictly "once upon a time" narration in the other. In this production, you're really in it, and no mistake. Why, there isn't even a conventional orchestra to come in from nowhere behind the songs—that well-worn artificial device which is the surest indication that everyone knows what is real and what isn't. The mock turtle is left on the shore utterly alone, still singing his sad, moving apostrophe to "beautiful soup" as we hurry on to the crowning absurdity of the mock trial. At least it used to be merely absurd; but here, too, the sober reality of the 20th century has already outpaced the childhood fantasy of the 19th. "I'll be judge, I'll be jury," says cunning old fury; "I'll try the whole case and condemn you to death!" This can be quite terrifying to us adults, but the smarter children will love it. —J.D.

A veritable *tour de force* by Hurd Hatfield

WILDE: *The Picture of Dorian Gray*; Hurd Hatfield (reader); direction by Howard Sackler. Caedmon TC-1095, \$5.95.

▲WRITTEN in 1891, Oscar Wilde's novel, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, was considered in its own day a shocker. The film of the mid-forties, starring Hurd Hatfield and George Sanders among others, got no such startled reaction, although the camera work and especially the color inserts (the remainder of the film was black and white) of the magnificently horrible portrait painted by the Albright brothers aroused considerable comment. The film did much, however, to establish the reputation of Hurd Hatfield as an actor, even though, as with Basil Rathbone and Sherlock Holmes, Hatfield has become inseparably identified with the role of Dorian Gray. That public and critical reaction is not misplaced may be verified by this magnificent reading.

Obviously the book has had to be severely cut in order to fit the confines of one long-playing record (and a long one at that), but the excising has been most skillfully accomplished, so that the deleted portions are hardly missed. Perhaps,

however, this is far more to the credit of Hatfield than one might suspect, for the actor manages not only Dorian's part but the roles of all the other characters as well, bridging transitional passages with amazing smoothness, and creating an effect of heightened tension and anticipation which causes the listener to become so absorbed that he can think only of the minute-by-minute outcome of the story. Hatfield's reading is a veritable *tour de force*. Every one of his roles is convincing—from the beginning innocence and passion of the young Gray through his transformation into the cold and cruel beast he becomes, or the sophisticated elegance of the cynical Lord Henry, or for that matter even the flighty drawing room ladies whose humor Wilde so adeptly captured.

Whether this is a recording to listen to again and again is an individual matter on which I should not like to commit myself except to note that the disc is obviously a memorable souvenir of either the film or the novel. Its lasting appeal, however, rests far more strongly on the virtuosity of Hatfield, and it is certainly to be hoped that Caedmon will present this actor with other projects. —I.K.

SOUND IDEAS

An Equipment Review

By LARRY ZIDE

PACO Stereophonic Preamplifier kit, Model SA-40

AS THE name indicates, the PACO SA-40 kit is a complete stereophonic preamplifier-control center combined on a single chassis with two twenty-watt power amplifiers. It is available as a do-it-yourself item or in factory-wired form.

PACO, although a newcomer to the high-fidelity field, has long been respected in the test gear kit field, and the parent company, Precision Apparatus Company, is known for some of the finest laboratory test equipment.

In examining the kit, the first thing that struck me was the thoroughness of the construction manual. Every facet of the construction (including a basic primer on soldering and kit construction in general) is fully explained and illustrated. The book is easily the finest of its kind I have yet seen. I would unhesitatingly suggest the construction of an SA-40 to the novice in spite of its complexity. There is a lot of equipment in this unit. As a result it is one of the most time-consuming kits I have ever encountered. But the results are worth the effort.

Construction Notes

As I indicated, the step-by-step instructions are excellent and complete. Since

the unit I built was one of the first production models the few minor flaws I found have been corrected in later models. For those of you who happen to get one that has not been corrected, here they are:

Instruction 142. Do not solder HHI at this time. This connection is to be soldered after construction is complete and the output tube bias has been balanced.

Instruction 255. Connect white lead to U4 if phono 2 input is to be wired as a second magnetic input instead of a ceramic input as indicated. If you are wiring phono 2 as a magnetic input skip steps 278 through 281.

But for these minor discrepancies the book is, so far as I can tell, perfect.

Performance Results

After the 23 hours I expended building the PACO I was more than just a bit curious to see how it performed.

On all high-level and low-level inputs the SA-40 met or exceeded all its important specifications. On phono inputs, response was flat from 15 kc down to 35 cycles. It was only 2.5 db down at 30 cycles. These are very good performance figures for a phono input. Over-all flat response of the amplifier was attained with the bass controls at flat setting and the treble set to about one o'clock position.



PACO KIT, MODEL SA-40
STEREOPHONIC PREAMPLIFIER-AMPLIFIER
Manufacturer's Specs

Power Output: Steady state power of 20 watts per channel;
peak power of 40 watts per channel

Frequency Response: ± 1 db, 30 cps to 90 kc at 1 watt steady state power

Distortion: Harmonic: less than 0.2% at 20 watts; IM: less than 1% at 20 watts

Sensitivity: High level: 0.75 volts for rated output; low level: 5 mv (phono) for rated output

Hum and Noise: High level: 80 db below rated output; low level Phono: 70 db below rated output; low level tape head: 65 db below rated output

Damping Factor: 22

Tone-Control Range: Bass: ± 15 db at 50 cycles; Treble: ± 15 db at 10 kc

Equalization: Phono: RIAA, EUR; tape head: 7½ and 3½

Speaker Connections: 4, 8, 16, 32 ohms per channel

Controls: Two position Equalization, Mode, Rumble, Contour, Speaker Selector (two), Input Selector, Balance, Volume, Separate Bass and Treble for each Channel

Inputs: 3 dual high level, 4 dual low level (phono 1, phono 2, tape head, mic.)

Size and Weight: 15½" wide, 11½" deep 5½" high; shipping weight, 25 lbs.

Price: Kit: \$79.95; factory built: \$129.95; prices include cover

The over-all sound quality of the system was very good. Bass was full and well-defined. Treble was clean and sweet. Using an electrostatic tweeter, I found no audible signs of instability.

Gain on phono was adequate for all but the lowest output cartridges. With cartridges of 5 mv per channel output, preamplifier noise was inaudible under all normal listening conditions. Regarding that noise level, the first stage preamplifier tube is specified as a 7025. All other preamplifier tubes are specified as 12AX7s. The 7025 is a premium-grade, extra-low-noise, version of the 12AX7. In the supply of tubes enclosed with the kit was an extra 12AX7 but no 7025. Substitution of the tube resulted in a lower noise level from the preamp. As to the over-all noise level of the combination preamp: with very high efficiency speakers there was an audible hiss and hum; with less efficient ones it was completely silent. I found the twenty watts per channel

the PACO provides quite adequate to power low-efficiency systems such as the AR and KLH units, provided the listening room is not especially large nor the volume levels extremely loud.

As the specs indicate, the SA-40 has several interesting features. Among these are the facility to power two separate stereo speaker systems; either one or both systems may be selected by a pair of front panel switches. Also provided is a rumble (but no scratch) filter. A separate loudness on-off switch is available for those who desire this control, as is a separate power on-off switch, which enables turning the system on or off without upsetting any controls.

PACO has come up with a winner to kick off their new high-fidelity line. This is a unit that is built to fit a price, but it is an exceptional value for the money. PACO also promises a matching AM-FM stereo tuner kit. When it becomes available, I hope to report on it here.

Collaro Constellation Record Changer Model TC-99

IF ANYONE has any doubts as to the place of a record changer in a high-fidelity system he should listen to a unit such as the Collaro's new TC-99. Here is a unit whose performance is only a shade inferior to the finest manual turntables available for home use. The arm, too, is very close to the best in transcription arm design.

A feature that is to be found only on record changers, and only a few of them at that, is the automatic disengagement of the turntable drive idler at the con-

clusion of the final record. This eliminates the problem of flat spots' developing on the idler through forgetfulness. On the Collaro the motor is shut off as well, thus providing a complete shut-off. The Collaro is equipped with a heavy, 12-inch turntable platter unlike most record changers which are fitted with 10-inch platters.

In performance tests I found a $1\frac{1}{2}$ gram difference in stylus pressure between the first and tenth record in a stack. Flutter and wow were excellent, as good as many transcription tables. Rumble was totally inaudible under monophonic listening conditions and only barely audible when listening to fairly loud stereo.

One feature of the Collaro I didn't care for is the basic change mechanism. Al-

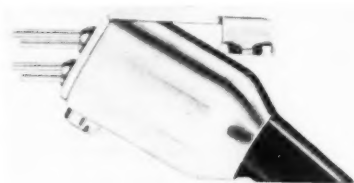


COLLARO CONSTELLATION RECORD CHANGER MODEL TC-99

Manufacturer's Specs
All performance specs exceed NARTB standards for wow, flutter, and rumble.
Powered by a heavy-duty four-pole motor, the changer features a five-terminal plug-in head shell. The 12-inch turntable weighs 6½ lbs. Price: \$59.50.
Proportionally higher with various phono cartridge and base combinations.

though of a smooth, jam-proof design, it is of a type which tends to enlarge the center hole of a record under repeated use. On my sample the muting switch, which is supposed to silence the cartridge during the change cycle, introduced a hum. Although the Collaro makes a fine manual player, the tone arm has no handle.

The change mechanism is driven by the motor directly, rather than by the turntable's notation as is usually the case, thus providing the same speed change cycle regardless of which of the changer's four speeds is used. The turntable itself is non-ferrous and consequently does not attract magnetic cartridges.



DYNACO B & O STEREO DYNE II
STEREO CARTRIDGE
Manufacturer's Specs

Frequency Response: ± 2 db from 30 cps to 15 kc.
Output Voltage: 7 mv per channel at 5 cm. sec at 1 kc.
Channel Separation: In excess of 22 db
Compliance: 5×10^{-6} cm/dyne in all directions
Load: 47,000 ohms or higher
Stylus: .7 mil diamond
Stylus Change: by user at home
Price: \$29.95

THE STEREO DYNE is a moving-iron design stereo cartridge, manufactured by Bang and Olufsen in Denmark and imported and distributed in this country by Dynaco, otherwise known for their home-grown Dynakit line of preamp and amplifier kits.

The moving-iron system utilizes the principle that a piece of iron, when moved in a magnetic gap, will generate a voltage in a coil wound around the poles. The mechanism of the cartridge is encased in a metal shield which forms the body of the cartridge.

In spite of the Stereodyne's apparently unusual shape, it mounts easily in most transcription arms and record changers. As with all cartridges care must be taken to level the Stereodyne in relation to the record. In some record changers special

The TC-99 is supplied fully wired, ready to plug in. It is available with several cartridges already installed. The sample supplied me was equipped with a Shure M7D. Limited tests indicated very little difference between this cartridge and the Shure M3D reported on here last April.

In conclusion, I still feel that the best reproduction of records must come from a manual player and arm. If, however, the convenience of a record changer outweighs its performance deficiencies relative to a good manual player, keeping in mind the fact that the Collaro sells for about \$75 less, then I recommend the Collaro TC-99 very highly.

care must be taken to insure that the stylus protective cover does not contact the record when a stack of discs is played.

The sound of the Stereodyne may be characterized as somewhat mellow. Response above 10 kc rolled off slowly to where it was 5 db down at 15 kc. Below this the cartridge was within ± 3 db to below 25 cycles. Over-all sound quality was exceptionally clean and held up very well on the inner grooves of a record. Frequency runs on both channels showed them to be within 2 db of each other over the entire range. These measurements were made with the Elektra 35 test record.

What is really outstanding about this cartridge is its channel separation. At mid frequencies, separation (which is responsible for the stereo effect) was exceptional. At high frequencies, where many stereo cartridges fail; the Stereo dyne was still excellent. Instrument wander was minimal, better than with any other cartridge I have heard to date.

Finally, the Stereodyne is an *easy* cartridge to listen to. Because of the high-frequency rolloff, the cartridge lends itself best to use with bright-sounding speakers. If I seem a bit reluctant to endorse the Stereodyne completely, it is only because there *are*, to my ears at least, slightly better-sounding cartridges available. On the other hand, if stereo rather than good sound *per se* is a primary consideration, then the Stereodyne is better than any other cartridge I have yet heard.

Folk Music

By HENRIETTA YURCHENCO

SINCE my return from Rumania the entrance to my apartment has been blocked by such towering decks of new releases that diamond needles aren't made strong enough to cope with all of them. Many have been given a hearing, however, and short verdicts follow. The rest next issue. . .

★
The Wild Blue Yonder; Oscar Brand with the Roger Wilco Four. Elektra 168, \$4.98.

▲BRAND, who has kept folk songs alive when few others were loyal, has this time given us an undistinguished album of Air Force "creations". He might have done better to have left the songs where he found them! This department wonders why he had to share them with the "unsuspecting world" at all. A collection of mediocre tunes and lyrics which does not need immortalization. Like smutty stories and college parodies, these advertise themselves. Patriotism and lofty sentiments do not alone a great album make.

★
Spanish Sardanas. The Coblá Girona. Capitol T-10121, \$3.98.

▲THE music for Catalonia's popular folk dance is tuneful, gay, and yet touching. An excellent ensemble from Girona, mostly brass and woodwinds, perform with verve and aplomb.

★
A Concert with Hillel and Aviva. Elektra 171, \$4.98.

Hillel and Aviva; *Night on the Desert.* Kapp KL-1163, \$3.98, or Stereo KS-3047-S, \$4.98.

▲THE Elektra disc, recorded at a Town Hall concert last March, is a potpourri of songs from Israel, Russia and the U. S. Hillel and Aviva do best with their own native material. (Not everybody can be Bikel!)

The Kapp recording is really excellent. The collection is discriminating and displays good musical taste. Besides Israel's new popular songs, there are tunes from Lebanon and Yemen. All are sung simply to arrangements which stress the monody of the Near East. Songs are performed in unison or in contrapuntal style. A few harmonic touches are done with a

fine hand. Hillel's playing on the *khallit* and Aviva's on "Miriam's Drum" successfully evoke the past. Aviva's singing style occasionally approaches Eastern technique when she permits a wide tremolo and many embellishments. For the most part the singing is straight Western with pronounced metrical measure. Hillel performs more or less in traditional non-metrical style. Adequate notes.

★
Flamenco Español. Odéon ASX-150, \$5.95 (Import).

▲FLAMENCO, with its plaintive melodies, the dark passion of its tonal colors and highly seasoned outbursts, still throbs towards our shores from Spain in unabated profusion. This one, recorded in Seville, has its merits. The two singers, Cojo de Huelva and Antonio Molina, are splendid. Molina has an unusually high-pitched voice but it is fine and clear. He has perfect articulation in the long melismatic passages, with remarkable breath control. His style is free, highly emotional, and passionately brittle. Cojo de Huelva has a deeper, darker, more mysterious voice. His is more spiritual, more mystical. Excellent zapateado from Roberto Ximenez, the dancer. The guitarists are "Sarasate", Luis Maravilla, Antonio Arenas, Antonio Gonzalez and Paco Aguilera—all wonderful.

★
Voice of Israel-Ohela Halevy. Riverside Specialty Series RLP 12-836, \$4.98.

▲ANOTHER example of the high quality of Israel's popular music. Unpretentious, pleasant, very musical singing. Miss Halevy sings the duets by herself, aided quite efficiently by Riverside's engineers. *Metzia*, the duet on Side 1 written by Goldberg and Miron, and *Tzei Lach* (from the Song of Songs), composed by Dov Seltzer, are outstanding. This department generally deplores piano accompaniment, but we gave in on this record—the instrument is used most effectively here.

★
Martha Schlamme Sings Jewish Folk Songs, Vol. 2; with orchestra conducted by Robert DeCormier. Vanguard VRS-9049, \$4.98.

▲THIS album of popular Jewish songs is performed by a sensitive, trained singer. Orchestral arrangements are good, but sometimes overdone. A good many selections are folk songs with new texts, some are by popular Jewish composers, and a number are traditional favorites. Miss

Henrietta Yurchenco is the chief folk music critic. Paul Kresh and Herbert Haufrecht are her associate reviewers.

Schlamme sings them with compassion and tenderness—complete identification with her material. Nevertheless, some tunes, like *Der Robbe Elimelech* parade here in overdressed arrangements. Good jacket notes by Miss Schlamme.

•
Bravo Bikel. Theodore Bikel Town Hall Concert. Elektra 175, \$4.98.

Theodore Bikel Sings More Jewish Folk Songs; Orchestra under direction of Fred Hellerman. Elektra 165, \$4.98.

▲THE complete Theodore Bikel—unrestrained, amusing, and thoroughly engrossing. Don't ask for folk singing, because he does what he pleases with a song. Everything is in this album—Spanish, Jewish, Israel, American Negro, Scottish, Serbian, etc. He plays the guitar and the harmonica, and finally plays them simultaneously. (Why couldn't he beat a two-headed drum with his feet instead of leaving them there idly on the floor?) Best part of the record is Bikel's reading of Robert Nathan's bitter barb at the 20th century from the vantage point of an imaginary archeologist of the 35th century. He also does an excellent bit on the fate of a folk song in Hollywood. Elektra provides all texts in their original languages and in English. Jewish folk songs are really this man's meat. In the second record he sings them with flavor and dramatic flair.

•
T Town; Los Tres Caballeros. Hifi-record R-810, \$4.95.

Viva! The Caballeros. Hifirecord R-816, \$4.95.

▲POPULAR night club performers in two albums of Latin-American fare. Easy listening, expert playing, and a certain slickness which should go over big with tired businessmen looking for "authentic" Mexican atmosphere in Tijuana (T Town) or Las Vegas, where the group is playing currently. The ensemble, consisting of marimba, guitar, and two accordions, play tangos, sambas, *pasodobles*, and many other Latin dances calculated to get you on your feet and swaying to undulating rhythms. Don't believe the title on these records—there are four caballeros, not three. The sound throughout is especially hi in fi.

•
Music at an Italian Wedding. Dino Romano and his Orchestra. Kapp KL-1138, \$3.98.

▲THIS music is gay, light, sparkling, and sweet like the Asti Spumanti served at an Italian wedding. The good nature and good melody contained on this one fairly jumps over the record. Waltzes, polkas, mazurkas—all borrowed gaiety from other countries—make common

cause with native-grown products like the *tarantella* and *contra-danza*.

•
Dainos is Lietuvos: Songs of Lithuania; Lione Jodis (contralto); Ruta Lietuviu Tautinis Meno Ansambelis; Lithuanian Folk Chorus Algird Kancanaskas and Jack J. Stukas, directors. Request Record RLP-8033, \$4.98.

▲THE Lithuanian Folk Chorus, a New York group organized in the forties, tries its best to present its national music. Unfortunately, the musical selection is mediocre, and alas, the chorus sings off-pitch. Lithuania seems to be caught between two political giants, Germany and Russia. Musically, they come off much better when they hew to Russia, and are much the losers with German umpa-pa style music. It is regrettable that the music does not match the charm of the lyrics given on the jacket.

•
Shadows in the Casbah. Artie Barsamian and his Orchestra. Kapp KL-1160, \$3.98.

▲EVERYBODY'S idea of sensual, hip-swaying, torso rolling music of the Near East served up in delectable style. Easy on the ear, no offense meant to anyone, harmonically and melodically agreeable. Wonderful with shish-kebab and yogurt.

The music is played by a group of musicians whose ancestors originally came from Near Eastern lands. The ensemble includes modern and ancient instruments. The mixture of clarinet and saxophone with the *oud* (Arabian lute), hourglass-shaped drums, tambourines, cymbals, and a zither-type instrument, makes a pleasant combination. Occasionally, one senses the Orient in this disc of expert night club music.

•
Johnny Cash in "Songs of our Soil"; Columbia CL-1339, \$3.98. **The Wilderness Road and Jimmie Driftwood;** Liberty LPM-1994, \$3.98. **Bud and Travis;** Liberty LRP-3125, \$3.98. **Folk Songs for Orchestra.** Columbia CL-1338, \$3.98.

▲FIRST came the Weavers, a quartet of fresh, enthusiastic, wonderful folksingers. Then came their imitators, the Kingston Trio, skillful but less fresh and inventive. And now we have the duet team of Bud and Travis. They, too, are gifted, but their ear is more attuned to the night club. Otherwise, why the fast tempo and frenetic beat in *Delia's Gone*? There is some nice mood established in *Malagueña Salerosa* and *Florencia de Mi Cielo*. Johnny Cash's "Songs of our Soil" should have the title altered to read: "Soil on our Songs". He has offered us a dull collection of standard folksongs and some of his originals in a

hill-billy, rock'n'roll corn mixture. Just fancy *Drink To Me Only With Thine Eyes* in such a setting, or *Grandfather's Clock* with a hopped up beat!

In contrast, Jimmie Driftwood's "Wilderness Road" leads us to fertile land and, though the corn is still in evidence, it is of a more nourishing southern mountain variety. He has a natural style and irrepressible humor. Even in *Slack Your Rope*, the tragedy of the original English ballad is lightened by his brighter tempo and color. His voice is pitched according to the characterizations; sometimes high, as in *Run, Johnny, Run*, elsewhere low; and in a dialogue song both registers are brought into play. The instrumental accompaniments are simple and tasteful. Of special interest is the use of the "pickin' bow", a sort of large Jew's harp.

Michel Legrand's Folk Songs for Orchestra is quite an arranger's extravaganza. The original folk songs are stretched, twisted, shrunk, blown up, beat upon, etc.—distorted in every possible way that only a Hollywood arranger could dream of.

•
Los Indios: Maravillosa! Epic LN-3530, \$3.98.

▲THIS group of singers and instrumentalists from Paraguay perform popular songs of their country in the accepted radio-TV style of Latin America. Good hi-fi equipment should be checked for syrup in the speaker after permitting this disc a whirl. Humming and whistling backgrounds are soporifically abundant. If there is a folk song in the collection—and no doubt there is—it is too thickly encrusted under its arrangement to be recognized. The notes claim that Los Indios "never use gimmicks or special effects nor do they tamper with the music." Perhaps the writer never heard the performers! For all that, the performers are professional and they put on a lively show.

•
Erich Kunz Sings German University Songs, Vol. IV; with Chorus and Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera conducted by Anton Paulik. Vanguard VRS-1045, \$4.98.

Music of the German Alps; Alfons Bauer (zither), singers, orchestra, etc. Capitol T-10211, \$3.98.

Music of the Italian Alps; Coro Trentino, Coro Villereccio Lombardo, Coro I.N.C.A.S., Coro di Ex Combattenti, Capitol T-10120, \$3.98.

▲KUNZ' fourth in his series of folk and quasi-folk records follows much the same pattern as the preceding releases. The music here is very familiar: *Muss i denn, Du, du liegst mir im Herzen, Vogelhochzeit, Moorsoldaten*, etc. plus such authentic

utterances of the rude peasant mentality as Brahms' *Lullaby* and Schubert's *Serenade*. The arrangements are sophisticated and unauthentic, but never treacly.

The singing and playing are very good, while the music is never less than ingratiating in this very Viennese collection of (largely) German music. The German Alps job is flashy, vulgar, and generally obnoxious. The performers are very polished, à la very expensive beer halls. For those with especially strong stomachs the record includes some cow-bell solos which absolutely beat all for banality. Alfons Bauer's tasteful and splendidly executed zither solos are out of place in this very hi-fi collection of rubbish. The Italian Alps are better represented. The selections include the haunting and mysterious yodels, in the far less blatant Italian manner, of *Valseriana*, the charming *L'Allegrie* and the ubiquitous *Corredo del Soldato*, among others moderately familiar and completely unfamiliar to me, combining to form a pleasing, uncited recital. The Ex Combattenti are rough and hearty vocally, showing the authenticity of their name. The other three groups are more refined and beautiful in tone but not overly so; all the groups are ideal for their music. —H.G.

•
Flamenco España; Bernabé de Morón and ensemble. HIFI record R-811, \$4.95, or Stereo R-811, \$5.95.

⑤THE only claim of this recording to fame is that it contains the best-recorded transients in the history of stereodiscs. The sound more than satisfies the ultra-high requirements of High Fidelity Recordings, Inc. The low-frequency pulses originating with the flamencan stompings of the dancers are indeed a hard test for any pick-up and loudspeaker system. The transients of the castanets have no equal, I am sure, in recorded literature. So far this is the only stereophonic disc I know that is transcribed well enough to test a pick-up for both low- and high-frequency musical transients. Unfortunately Señor de Morón is up against some very stiff competition in this field, for example los señores Montoya y Segovia. Even though technically very competent, he fails to project the unearthly excitement of gypsy flamenco. If the instinctive, world-dissolving, gypsy unconscious urging is there, Señor de Morón and his accompanying artists do not choose to abandon themselves to it. —C.V.C.

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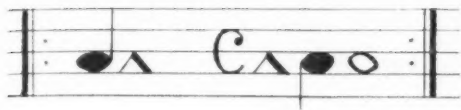
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A column for collectors

By STEVEN SMOLIAN

A CONSIDERABLE and increasing percentage of so-called "good music" programming on FM is derived from performances not available through commercial channels—on radio or recordings. This phenomenon, of recent vintage, already has strongly affected the listening habits of many music lovers, for in most cases these unusual and most interesting concerts are heard but once in each area. Tape recorder owners have been known to rearrange their lives to record (illegally) a promising broadcast. How is it possible to present such unusual radio fare?

American stations fall into two distinct categories: commercial and non-commercial, the former deriving income from commercial advertisements and the latter by appropriation, either by a municipal government or an educational institution.

Commercial stations are required by law to devote a certain portion of their air time to "programs in the public interest", and because most program material supplied from abroad cannot, by terms of the agreement under which it is furnished, be sponsored, it can be broadcast in the public interest. Of course, there are limitations to the amount of time which a typical station can "donate".

The non-commercial stations have their own problems. Their audience, usually limited to FM listeners, is smaller. Their budgets generally are more restricted by comparison to their commercial counterparts. Also, most of these educational organizations are faced with a shorter broadcasting day into which all programs must be fit. Scheduling can be a bit more elastic without advertisers, however, making room for programs of unwieldy length (opera, long choral works, etc.) with greater frequency.

"Serious" live music on the radio traditionally has originated either in our concert halls or from the premises of the station itself. The Metropolitan Opera, the New York Philharmonic, the Boston

and Cleveland Orchestras all have been steady sources of live music for broadcast purposes. In addition, many stations originate musical performances specifically for the air. The old NBC Symphony series comes immediately to mind, but this has been far from the only such venture. Admirers of the voice have heard many fine artists on the Firestone and Bell Telephone hours; and WQXR in New York, now the hub of an extensive east coast network, has long had a small but excellent group of studio musicians and given over time to a pair of interesting programs built around them: the WQXR String Quartet and the duo-piano team of Hambro and Zayde. These are, incidentally, the only regularly scheduled live music broadcasts in stereo I have been able to trace.

WNYC and many other stations, to be sure, give coverage to local musical events. But in grand opera and symphony concerts the commercial outfits have the monetary advantage, although the unions seem to be adopting a more liberal attitude towards educational broadcasters, supporting concerts and broadcast clearance rights through their own performance fund and even permitting these stations to broadcast from location.

In recent years we have been fortunate enough to find a new type of program—something which was formerly available only through short-wave, a most unsatisfactory program source from the fidelity standpoint. To wit, we can now tune in on programs of live music directly from European sources.

The basic idea behind these programs is to give Americans a picture of concert life abroad. With certain exceptions, this broadcasting material is taped at concerts with an audience present. Copies are made and distributed to the radio stations which program them at times convenient to each station. The station must allow sufficient time for presenta-

tion of the whole program or, in the case of longer works, in sections sanctioned by the supplying agency, because most contracts specify that the programs cannot be divided or re-edited.

Formerly the distribution of such musical programs had to be arranged by each station with the foreign source. This not only meant the necessity of each distributor's making his own copies, but also involved each station on the receiving end with red tape, negotiations with publishers, and customs.

The dollars-and-cents problem is not limited to the radio stations. The various international agencies which supply these programs generally work on a restricted budget, and because tape copying is an expensive process either the receiving station has to bear the costs or another method has to be used. Thus the BBC and the Netherlands Information Service still send out discs in preference to tapes. What broadened the distribution of these programs was the creation of two agencies here in the United States to undertake the importation of the master tapes, their copying, and their placement. These are the Broadcasting Foundation of America (BFA) and the National Association of Educational Broadcasters (NAEB).

Stations are charged, therefore, for the cost of the raw tape only.

The oldest service supplying European musical material to American radio is the British Broadcasting Corporation. Its transcription program, an outgrowth of its radio activities during World War II, is still the most extensive of all. Material is not restricted to either British music or British artists, but rather tends toward unusual works by established composers (last year's five "Unknown Haydn" programs, with commentary by H. C. Robbins Landon, Handel's "*Joshua*" and "*Joseph*"), contemporary works (a recent selection was Britten's new opera, "*Noye's Fludde*"), and of course festival performances from all over the British isles (Edinburgh, Glyndebourne, Aldeburgh) featuring artists from all over the world. As with the other suppliers mentioned, copying of BBC material by private

parties is prohibited because of copyright restrictions and agreements with the artists. Only radio stations can subscribe to these records, and they must be destroyed three years from the date of recording. The maximum pressing is determined by orders received a set time after the forms have been sent out. I cannot help envisioning a "black" market for these discs in a few years, similar to that which sprang up after World War II for the 16" transcriptions used by our own Armed Forces Radio.

The other major record supplier is the Netherlands Information Service, which services not only stations but also educational institutions, and ostensibly builds good will by providing an arbitrary few printed media with review copies. The releases are limited to Dutch music played by Dutch musicians. One attraction of these programs is the participation of the Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra, whose performance standards are very high indeed.

Most of the other cultural propaganda suppliers use the medium of magnetic tape. The BFA and NAEB have duplicating facilities, which solves the problem of making enough copies to go around. BFA in particular has a most imposing roster of countries, each anxious to present to the American public the most impressive phases of their musical life. Next year, if all goes as planned, we shall be hearing the Dubrovnik Festival from Yugoslavia in addition to the important features of past years: Salzburg, the Scandinavian festivals, the Prague Spring Festival, the French National Orchestra series, the Bayreuth Festival and German Symphonic Music series (the Germans established a special agency to prepare programs for the BFA), a number of musical features from Hungary, the Spoleto Festival and a number of operas from Italy, occasional material from Russia, an Israel Concert Hall group, and a few features from this or that land with a musical language difficult for ears accustomed to the tempered scale. In the recent past there have been series on Chinese and on Indian music. At present we are not getting much from Japan,

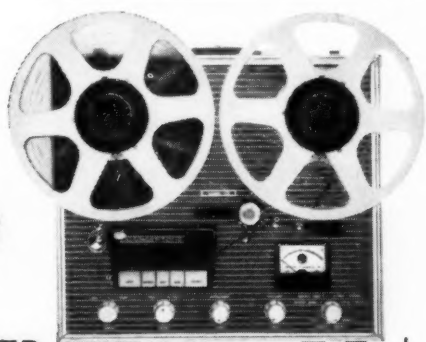
but I do recall most vividly hearing Kurt Wöss conducting Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* with the texts in a Japanese translation.

Needless to say, these broadcasts are well worth hearing, and many are not to be missed. Far better than consulting a local paper for scheduling is a subscription to the program guides published by most "good music" stations. In New York area some of this data may be found in *Cue*.

Obviously, this type of international programming not only gives us an opportunity to hear much music which otherwise would be seldom or never heard, but also demonstrates how active concert life is in other parts of the world; gives us a chance to hear many groups which we

have known only through records, performing with an audience present (notice how much faster Böhm sounds under the latter conditions), permits us to judge the day in, day out, playing of an orchestra under various conditions (why do Viennese groups generally sound so tired?); and lets us hear conductors, soloists, and orchestras in juxtapositions which would be impossible on records under present contracts. We can also witness the rise of new composers and artists as they establish reputations. In other words, such programming permits us to go beyond the present scope of the record catalogue. That is why collectors are listening to FM more than ever before, and often with their tape recorders humming away.

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Opelika, Alabama

(Continued from page 331)

touching she was in the last act, when she begs Jenufa to understand and forgive her, her great love pouring forth, before going off to face the consequences of her deed. Just a few brief phrases—but Fisher made them unforgettably poignant. English record companies should hang their heads in shame for never having recorded this great artist. Certainly her Kostelnicka should be preserved.

The role of Jenufa is far less spectacular than that of the Kostelnicka, but it is no less demanding. Gré Brouwenstijn created a sensitive characterization. She made Jenufa mature, degree by degree, before our eyes. Her lengthy scene in the second act, when she wakes and finds her baby and her mother missing and slowly convinces herself that her terror is groundless, only to find on the Kostelnicka's return that the baby is indeed dead, was performed with real perception. Both her terror and her grief were fully realized. Throughout the opera she pointed up Jenufa's sufferings with gentle but telling

artistry which gave her final duet with Laca a radiance that had no trace of sentimentality. Brouwenstijn's voice is an extraordinarily expressive one. It responds equally well to both passionate outbursts and tender lyrical utterances. She was, unfortunately, somewhat hampered by the English text, but her supreme artistry and musicianship were nevertheless unmistakable. In addition, she is an exceptional actress who shuns all artifice and pretense and instead goes straight to dramatic essentials and elaborates them with subtleties and nuances, which results in a disarmingly complete portrayal. Surely Brouwenstijn is one of the finest operatic artists of our time.

Richard Cassilly is in every way an exceptional tenor. Unlike so many Americans he has resisted the temptation to make an Italian of himself. His voice, somewhat reedy though not unpleasantly so, is a very flexible instrument with an exceptionally wide dynamic range even in its extreme upper register. But, best of all, he is a really gifted actor. His portrayal had the same kind of earnestness and sincerity as that which Brouwenstijn and Fisher brought to theirs. All three worked together, under Christopher West's imaginative direction, to give all their scenes full dimension dramatically, and, under Von Maticic's excellent leadership, to give performances of great artistic integrity musically.

Robert Charlebois, as Steva, was below the level of his colleagues, but the small roles were generally well performed.

The English translation of the opera by Edward Downes and Otakar Kraus is excellent. There is seemingly no reason why this opera should not be given by other major companies in America. While it was not successful at the Metropolitan in 1924, audiences elsewhere should respond to this kind of operatic drama; Menotti and other composers have paved the way for its acceptance. In my opinion the New York City Opera should seriously consider this work. It is an ideal one for that splendid company at its best and, at its best, the company could do the piece greater justice than many more glamorous troupes.

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WHY NOT LOOK below the surface occasionally and find out what it is in the direct appeal of the popular tune which makes the audience go home whistling; to see if there is not some artistic impulse hidden in unlikely corners. . .

—Ralph Vaughan Williams

TO BEGIN the new year in a properly righteous mood, I would like to clear away a pile of records, some of which have proved pleasing, even entertaining. But, to continue moodily, a confession first. These discs are not necessarily mentioned because of any intrinsic merit, but rather because copies have shown up at the ARG office, and this kind of attention should not go unnoticed, unheralded nor, as the case may be, unpunished.

A further confession: I don't really think I like critics, and there are moments, in my loftier and lonelier hours, when I question the function of the critic. Mayhap I know too many of them, and too much about their prejudices, their friends, their frequently bitchy (I know that's a feminine term) attitudes.

With rare exception, critics are Those Who Can't Do, but Who Know All. It becomes increasingly tiresome to read some pipsqueak sounding off on the work of others—work he himself could not possibly do. Not that one need be a baritone to judge good singing. And that's another thing: In popular music it is usually the performer whose work is judged, and that of the true creators, the composers and lyricists, which is overlooked. Unless a critic truly understands the intention of the song writers (and knows a bit about the technical problems of music), he has no business judging the music. When I read a critic who cannot pick out a tune with one finger, let alone compose a song, pontificating on a score by, say, Rodgers and Hammerstein, and dismissing it as not so good as "Oklahoma!", or comparing it to the score of some other composer (what's to compare?), or picking out three-note phrases "stolen" from the works of other composers—believe me, the gorge rises, the blood percolates, and the eyes see red. Not that R. and H. are above criticism, but let us at least treat them with intelligence and

understanding. Not only them but all true creators, who know better what they are doing than a raft of critics who hack out their quickly to be forgotten copy while, for some reason, the work it flayed goes on as if they had never lived. Well, so much for that. Where was I?

Fred Astaire has produced a new album (old news by now, perhaps, but worth mentioning in case you neglected to get it). **Now** (Kapp KL-1165) is one of Astaire's better albums for two reasons, the choice of songs and the instrumental backing. There is a good deal of Irving Berlin included, not only several of the songs Astaire introduced in the Berlin-scored movies of the thirties but also three rare Berlin songs from before the twenties: *The Girl on the Magazine Cover* (1915), *I Love to Quarrel with You* ('14), and *Along Came Ruth* ('14). This information is not supplied in the liner notes, nor even on the record label. (Kapp does not see fit to give the composers credit, which is tantamount to artistic vandalism.) Among the other good songs, well sung in impeccable Astaire style, are *The Afterbeat* (Lyrics: Johnny Mercer, Music: Astaire), *Something's Gotta Give* (Lyrics and Music: Mercer), the Gershwins' *Oh, Lady Be Good* and *They Can't Take that Away from Me*, and the Harold Arlen-J. Mercer song *One for My Baby*, introduced by Astaire in a now little remembered film, *The Sky's the Limit*.

Some deserved attention is given to the master lyricist Ira Gershwin, but hardly with completely happy results, by **Mitzi Gaynor Sings the Lyrics of Ira Gershwin** (Verve MG V-2115). This is an album worth having, if only for the material included, among which are some of the old Gershwin standbys—*Soon, That Certain Feeling, There's a Boat Dal's Leaving for New York* (is another recording of this song required?), as well as the lesser known

Half of it Dearie, Blues. The one song new to records is *Spring Again*, written by Ira Gershwin with Vernon Duke to round out the score for "The Goldwyn Follies" after the death of George Gershwin. Neither Miss Gaynor, who is an engaging film personality, nor the strident arrangements and orchestral accompaniment by Russell Garcia, do the songs full justice. I won't dwell on this subject, but must admit that further listenings injured me, and made it possible to enjoy the recordings eventually. The lyrics themselves and the excellent liner notes by Lawrence D. Stewart are the true merits of the album.

If you, as I, harbor a partiality for the score of "The Music Man", you may find delight in the new album. . . and then I wrote **The Music Man** (Capitol T-1320), in which composer-lyricist Meredith Willson and his enchanting wife Rini informally work their way through most of the score and story of the musical. Willson talks, plays the piano, and sort of sings. Mrs. Willson sings in the most captivating dialect-soprano heard on these shores since Jenny Lind. Not only do I find I am still fond of Meredith Willson's delightful score; I'm afraid I also have a crush on his wife. There should be many more albums made available to collectors (rarely do these recordings enjoy a wide general sale), in which the composer has an opportunity—if willing—to give an idea of how the songs sounded *before* the vocalists, directors, arrangers, *et al.*, took over.

"The Music Man" reminds me that Decca Records has released the latest in their series devoted to the preservation and appreciation of the vocalizing of the Barber Shop Quartets. The annual event, held in Chicago's Civic Opera House, decides the top teams all over the country; Decca then records the winners. If you like this kind of Americana, you will find the winning quartets recorded on ©DL-78927 and the choruses on ©DL-78928.

Speaking of Americana, a couple of other records are noteworthy, if only to bring your attention to albums your teen-ager knew about long before anyone. These elaborately illustrated sets are titled **Swingin' On A Rainbow** (Chancellor 5004), in which Frankie Avalon, who seems to be some sort of teen-age idol, sings (I think). **The Fabulous Fabian** (Chancellor 5005) features the singing of Fabian, who also sings (I think). Of the two, Fabian seems to possess the more developed voice, and also he does not depend so heavily on a militantly rock 'n' roll accompaniment. The albums themselves, however, are more worthy of comment, for they are filled with photographs of the two young heroes. Further, there is a full-color (lifesize?) photograph folded into the album, with instructions on how it may be

removed without damage to the likenesses of Messrs. Avalon and Fabian. It's all technicolor and a yard high—just the thing for that bare spot in the living room. There must be some sort of moral here, but I'd rather not tackle it.

Frank Sinatra and Dinah Shore have released new albums; that is, they were new when this was written. Suffice it to say that they won't be old by the time you read this. **No One Cares** (Capitol ©SW-1221) finds Sinatra in excellent voice throughout a fine selection of songs, including *Stormy Weather*, *I Can't Get Started*, *I Don't Stand a Ghost of a Chance*, and a poignant Willard Robison song, *A Cottage for Sale*.

Miss Shore is similarly voiced in **Dinah, Yes Indeed!** (Capitol ©ST-1247), singing in typical Shore style a number of good songs, among them *Taking a Chance on Love*, *I'm Old Fashioned*, *Sentimental Journey*, and some medleys. The imaginative arrangements by Nelson Riddle add to the sparkle.

Mixed Emotions (Capitol ©ST-1266) introduces a new singer, Susan Barrett, she of the marvelous range, intelligent and musical phrasing, and fine voice. Good taste, too, for her songs are wisely chosen for their quality: *Bewitched*, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, *Hey There, I Get Along Without You Very Well*, among others. You would do well to support Miss Barrett and thus to encourage Capitol to release more of her records.

Likewise Jeri Southern, whose new album, **Jeri Southern at the Crescendo** (Capitol ©T-1278) is made up of good songs tastefully presented. Miss Southern's voice is difficult to describe, having a rather husky, bittersweet quality that is wonderful and beautifully handled. The clean, refined arrangements are uniformly fine, particularly the too often neglected Jerome Kern *Remind Me*.

Lerner and Loewe are given pretty good treatment in **The Musical World of Lerner and Loewe** (M-G-M E-3781); that is, Loewe is, all that Lerner supplies are the titles. The music is performed by an orchestra under a conductor named Ornadel. The treatment is quite straightforward and a good number of melodies are run through. The usual songs are here from "My Fair Lady", "Gigi", "Brigadoon", and "Paint Your Wagon".

In a similar vein, several songs associated with Al Jolson are given the instrumental treatment in **Memories of Jolie** (Warwick 2001) by Morty Craft and his Singing Strings. This set is ideal for easy listening. The arrangements and the orchestra seem to be above the usual average of these instrumental sets. The album is suitably decorated with pictures of Jolson in typical scenes (though there is no

life-sized photo, alas; but then, he was a giant). And Ed Cole has supplied some excellent liner comments: informational and nostalgic.

But not all is sweetness and light this month. For example, here is an album, **Ski Songs** (Elektra 177) sung by folk singer Bob Gibson. Possibly you've got to be a skier (I'm not though I'd like to be) to appreciate this collection properly. But as songs, these seem to me a rather tasteless group, pointless, and preciously clever at the junior college level. I mention this only because it may be that skiers stick together like *aficionados* of the bullfight, with their own code, language, secret handclasp, and marching songs; and should any of my readers belong to the group, I feel it my duty to inform them of this album. You may laugh at its obvious jokes; but if you love good songs, you may cry.

Though I've managed to work up a strong immunity to the appeal of Dean Martin he may be heard in **A Winter Romance** (Capitol ©1285) pleasantly singing some rather nice songs: *Let It Snow*, *I've Got My Love To Keep Me Warm*, the evergreen *Winter Wonderland* (by Felix Bernard and Dick Smith), and the inevitable *White Christmas*. Capitol might send a copy of this album to Elektra.

My son David, who at the age of six recently retired from a critic's career to devote his full time to education (first grade P.S. 87), has come out of semi-retirement to bring attention to a few records made for children (or are they actually, like those expensive toys, made for adults?): **Fable Forest** (Playhouse 202) brings together a group of charming stories, Aesop-like with morals, told by Jim Copp. There is a wild imagination at work on this record, one that will appeal to adults also, but the sound effects and the stories interest children as well. David also liked the first **Jim Copp Tales** (Playhouse 101), a similarly fanciful delight. If by chance you cannot get these at your regular dealer's, write directly to Playhouse Records, Box 36061, Los Angeles 36, California. We all watch "Huckleberry Hound" around here. David, his two-year-old sister, Carla, and old beat up Dad. These delightful personalities—Huckleberry, Yogi Bear, Jinx (the cat that talks like a Beatnik) with the wonderful voices, supplied by Daws Butler and Don Messick—may be heard on **Huckleberry Hound** (Col-Pix 202) in a series of adventures which delights all of us. TV, pervasive as it is, has no doubt furnished a ready market for this record, but you may have missed it.

Let's All Sing With The Chipmunks (Liberty 3132) brings *Alvin's Harmonica* and *The Chipmunk Song* along with ten



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others in one neat and rather entertaining package. Of course, through the tricky possibilities of tape, all characters are done by David Seville. This sort of idea might easily have become merely silly, but somehow Seville carries it off so that parents within hearing range don't suffer too much—at least, not till the 683rd playing.

David also recommends **Bible Songs and Stories** (Golden Records GRC-10), containing, besides the record, an elaborate booklet with illustrations, and the lyrics—about The Creation, The Tower of Babel, Solomon, Daniel, Ruth—should anyone want to join in. The songs are in the popular vein, but they are in good taste, some of them spiritual-like, and quite catchy. David thinks *Moses*, *Little Moses* is "very nice, and one of my favorite songs from the whole record." —E.J.

THE MONTH'S JAZZ

Martin Williams is our chief jazz critic. Joe Goldberg and Larry Gushee are associate jazz critics. The responsibility for this column is sometimes divided, sometimes rotated, among them.

Reflections: *Steve Lacy plays Thelonious Monk.* New Jazz 8206. \$4.98.

▲LACY (presented here with piano, bass, and drums) has been pulled into orbit around Thelonious Monk, and anyone who has ever experienced the primitive and highly artistic force of Monk's best work will understand the force of his attraction. Anyone who has ever struggled to learn Monk's tunes will also recognize to what extent their special character depends on a highly individual style, involving not only the tunes, but also rhythmic feeling and phrasing as well. Given the hazards of measuring oneself against Monk in this way, this record is indeed quite an achievement. At the same time Lacy is far more than a Monk disciple, and Mal Waldron more eclectic than imitative of Monk. It is unusual enough that Lacy uses the soprano sax, unusual too that he has by now largely succeeded in controlling his intonation on that maverick horn. Bechet managed it by using a vibrato so wide that out-of-tuneness was no issue. Lacy, on the other hand, plays with a straight tone that is most appropriate to his sophisticated use of wide intervals and the "abstract" character of his melodic inventions. It is unfortunate that the group does not always capture the tension and excitement of a Monk performance, for the sameness of textures of these renditions requires something of this nature to stave off monotony. But I would particularly recommend *Let's Call This* and *Ask Me Now* on their own merits, as well as providing a proof that Monk is no unapproachable monolith. —L.G.

●
Gil Evans Orchestra. World Pacific 1270. \$4.98.

▲EXCEPT for a tentette album on Prestige, Gil Evans' work, since his resurgence as an arranger, has depended for much of its effectiveness on having a recognized major soloist in the band, such as Miles Davis or Cannonball Adderly. This time, he has done without that extra.

He has taken tunes from a range of jazz history that encompasses *Davenport Blues* and *Django*, and such disparate saxophonists, for instance, as Budd Johnson and Steve Lacy, and come up with a fascinating album. His excellences and drawbacks are pretty much the same as they have always been. His main achievement is in the field of tone color, the playing off of instrument against instrument for often exquisite effects. Almost by its nature, this talent can work best at slow tempos, where the ear can savor more completely what is being done. This alone would make his slow tempos more effective, but he also has a rather jerky rhythmic sense (note *Straight No Chaser*) and an overly coy, cute way of dealing with numbers like *Joy Spring*.

Oddly enough, the most completely successful tracks are the two attempts to restate old songs (*Davenport Blues* and *Chant of the Weed*) in modern terms. The use of Budd Johnson's clarinet on the latter is an inspiration, and trumpeter John Coles, a Davis-influenced man, is better on the Beiderbecke piece than when coping with the more contemporary scores.

Perhaps Quincy Jones had his finger on the problem when discussing in *Downbeat* the arrangers he wanted for his new band. "Gil Evans for ballads", he said. —J.G.

●
What Is There to Say?: The Gerry Mulligan Quartet. Columbia CL-1307. \$3.98.

▲EIGHT tunes by Mulligan, Art Farmer, Bill Crow, and Dave Bailey. This release should have been mentioned some months ago, but somehow found its way into a dark corner of my record cabinet. From one point of view, it is a fine piece of work, and anyone who has not heard Mulligan much and is not opposed on general principle to the way he makes his groups sound should find at least half the performances here to be quite superior. However, Mulligan is repeating a style which he has already pretty well wrapped up; and in my opinion we can demand more

of him. His particular genius lies in the way he is able to form groups that give us his musical personality whole, reflected in the necessarily diverse styles of the separate players. At the same time by some means or other, most of the pieces from his workshop assert an identity as individual compositions that I find quite remarkable, in comparison with much of the jazz that appears on record. To be sure, the reduction of musical means he effected some six or seven years ago has a lot to do with this. But Mulligan demonstrated in his EmArcy Sextet release of 1956 that adding more horns did not diminish the coherence of his work, and more along this line and of the United Artists album of music from "I Want to Live" would be welcome. This LP is well engineered, and the balance of bass and horns, so necessary for the quartet format to work, is nearly impeccable. Art Farmer's playing here is as careful and well executed as ever. There are beauties in it, although they are unobtrusive to the point of risking complete oversight. His very lack of an aggressive musical character, however, lets him fit in with Gerry without apparent discomfort. And he makes us wish this record had been made in 1952.

—L.G.

Django Reinhardt. Pathé 1012, \$4.98 (Import).

▲THESE ten items of Djangoiana were recorded between 1939 and 1940 (one comes as late as 1945). They give the impression of being from five to ten years out of phase with American jazz of the time: three of the four arrangements for big band are quite atrocious and reminiscent of the heavy-handed approach of Casa Loma or the studio bands of the early thirties. The combo performances fall, I think, in the tradition of the chamber jazz which developed in this country during the late twenties (for instance: Clarence Williams, Red Nichols, Venuti-Lang), and are the best framework for Reinhardt's work, if any framework need be used at all. Only a few tunes here can stand on their own merits as jazz, without our nostalgic attraction to the refined and careful style typified by the Quintet of the Hot Club; but then some such statement could be made about much American jazz of the same period. Ros-taing and Combelle, the two clarinetists featured with Django play nicely in this chamber style, and Pierre Fouad, the drummer on *Dark Eyes* (that is, *Les Yeux Noirs*) rather surprises one with the firmness of his drumming. *Swing 41* is interesting for its traces of Goodmansque riffing, and *Swing 42* maintains a unity of mood lacking on most of the bands. Django, of course, is *sui generis*, but re-

grettably this is not his best work. I would recommend instead RCA LPM-1100, which has a bonus: two fine choruses by Hawk on *Avalon*. I think the quotation from Django which heads the liner notes is an admirable reflection of the superior qualities of his own playing, and deserves quotation: "*Le jazz m'a attiré parce que j'y trouvais une perfection de forme et une justesse instrumentale que j'admire dans la grande musique mais qui font défaut aux musiques populaires.*"

—L.G.

Ornette Coleman. *The Shape of Jazz to Come.* Atlantic 1317, \$4.98.

▲COLEMAN is, apparently, all things to all men. According to Martin Williams, who wrote the liner notes for this album, his playing "will effect the whole character of jazz music profoundly and pervasively". An advertisement for a concert he is participating in refers to him as "the new alto saxophone sensation". A jazz disc jockey calls him the "most talked-about musician in town". And in the "Goings On About Town" section of *The New Yorker*, he is "Ornette Coleman and his perhaps mortally wounded alto saxophone".

I will be more than happy to leave technical discussion of Coleman's music to Williams' liner notes, for he seems to have a much better grasp of the situation than I. What I hear from this group (Coleman, alto sax; Don Cherry, trumpet; Charlie Haden, bass; and Billy Higgins, drums) is almost completely different on fast and slow numbers. The up-tempo selections are nerve-shattering unrealized fragments, departing, it would seem, from Charlie Parker at the time of *KoKo*. On slower numbers, Coleman, who sounds much like the late Ernie Henry, is capable of composing strange melody lines that stick naggingly in the mind for days, and, on his solos, playing isolated phrases that have an instantly affecting beauty.

The instrumentation of this group will suggest the Gerry Mulligan Quartet, but the only point of similarity is that Coleman's musicians have taken harmonic advantage of the absence of a piano, while Mulligan's thought in such a harmonically conventional way that the piano might as well have been there all along.

In reference to the various quotations above, it will be interesting to see what happens to the career of the first new prophet to appear since the publicity machinery of jazz has gotten itself in full swing. Coleman's is an authentic attempt, and the initial praise for it came from musicians. Now, it seems, everyone else has climbed aboard for what may be a long, long ride.

—J.G.

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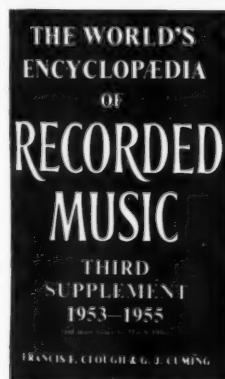
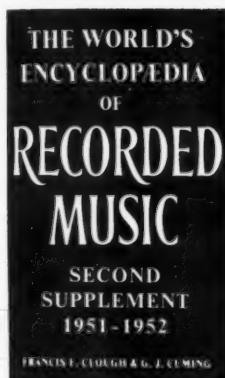
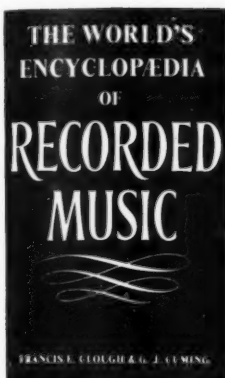
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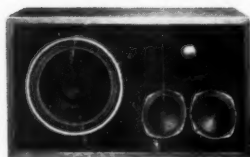
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